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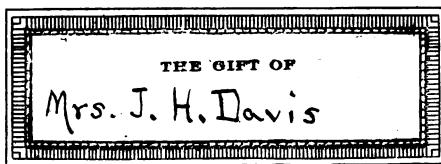
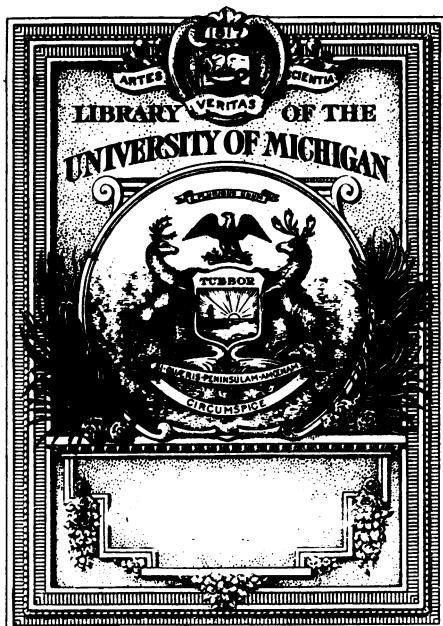
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EPIPHANIES OF THE RISEN LORD.

BY

GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN,

AUTHOR OF

"STUDIES IN THE CREATIVE WEEK," AND "STUDIES IN THE MODEL
PRAYER."

TO WHOM ALSO HE SHOWED HIMSELF ALIVE AFTER HIS PASSION,
BY MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS, BEING SEEN OF THEM FORTY DAYS,
AND SPEAKING OF THE THINGS PERTAINING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Acts of the Apostles, 1, 8.

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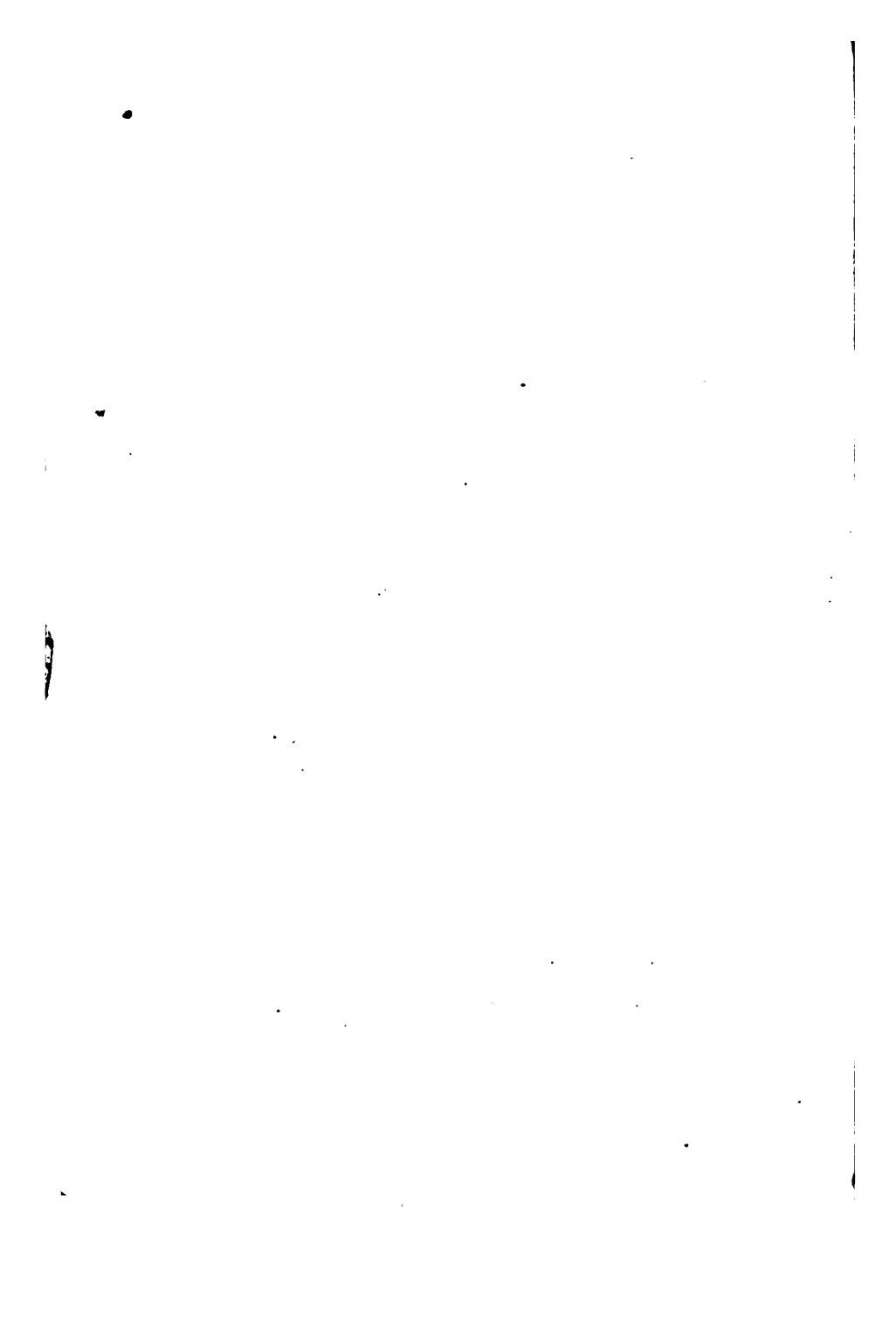


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TO ALL

WHO IN SORROW, IN ILLNESS, IN WEARINESS, IN PATIENT SERVICE,
ARE LOOKING FOR THE
BLESSED HOPE
OF HIS GLORIOUS EPIPHANY,
THIS VOLUME IS OFFERED.



Gift
Mrs. J. H. Davis
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P R E F A C E.

IN arranging the Epiphanies of the Risen Lord, the author is aware that there are difficulties in harmonizing the accounts of them as given by the Evangelists. Nor is it strange that there should be these difficulties. In the first place, Christ's risen body was an absolutely unique body, endowed with supernatural properties, and as such capable of moving with supernatural celerity, and therefore might have seemed to appear in different places at practically the same moment. Secondly: it was a period of intense excitement among the disciples; they had suddenly and most unexpectedly lost their beloved Master: so absolutely were all their hopes crushed, that the thought did not occur to them that they would ever see Him again: accordingly, His sudden re-appearance was to them a total, bewildering surprise: no wonder that under such circumstances

Matt. xxviii.

Mark xvi.

Luke xxiv.

John xx, xxi.

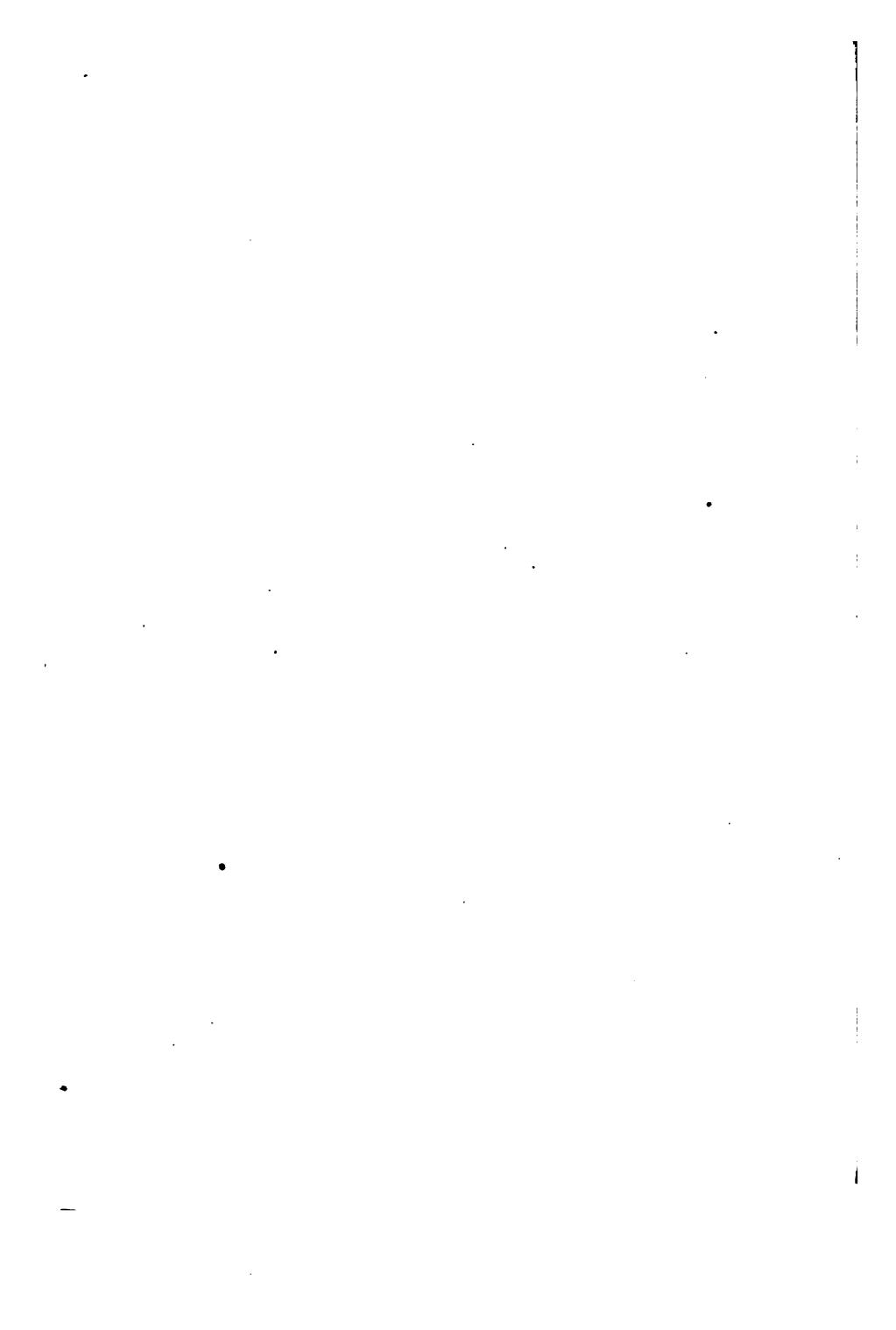
1 Cor. xv. 4-8.

absolute harmony of separate accounts would have been almost impossible. Thirdly : as a matter of fact, we do have five separate accounts, each narrator having his own special purpose in view, and neither of them undertaking to give a complete recital ; no wonder then that the narratives are in respect to minor details quite different ; for so would be the sketches of Mount Washington taken from Conway and Gorham and Jefferson and Bethlehem and Franconia. Fourthly : the very diversity of these narratives is a sign of their truthfulness : forgers would have taken pains to seem consistent. Put five veracious witnesses on the stand to testify to a long and complex transaction ; how different and apparently conflicting their testimonies will be touching minor details ; their testimonies will be discrepant just because the testifiers are truthful, each testifying from his own view-point ; yet under the seeming contradiction there will be real harmony ; it is the diversity of tones which makes the gamut a melody.

May the Risen Lord honor this book by making it the means of beholding Him in blessed, eternal Epiphany !

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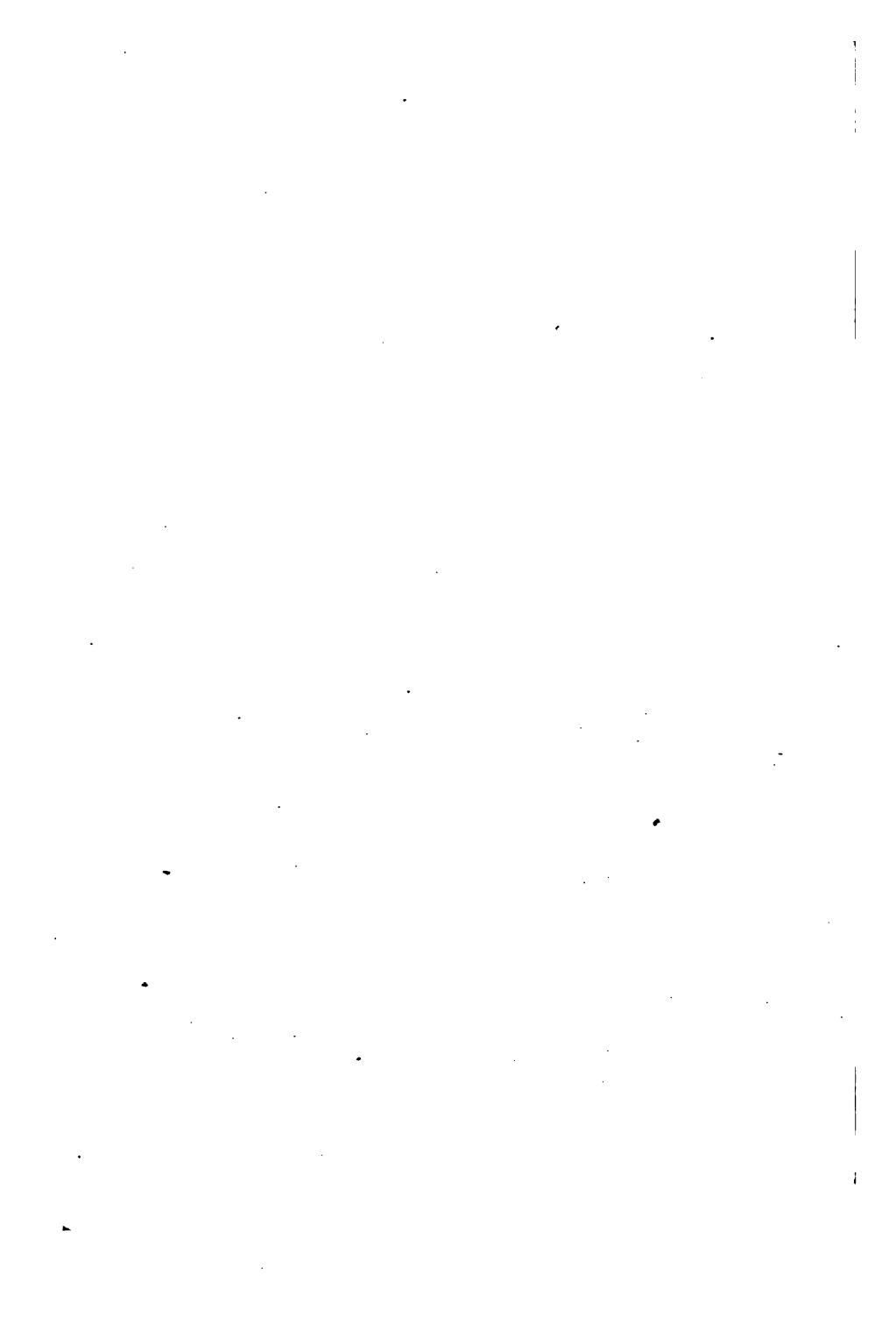
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THE
ENTOMBMENT OF JESUS CHRIST.

He made His grave with the wicked,
And with the rich in His death.

ISAIAH, liii. 9.



I.

THE ENTOMBMENT OF JESUS CHRIST.

THAT we may feel certain that our Lord really died, and therefore that there is a solid foundation for the story of His Resurrection, let us ponder the story of His death.

A Mosaic statute expressly forbade that the corpses of criminals should remain unburied after sunset. Accordingly, as the day was fast ebbing away, the Jews came to Pilate and begged permission to have the legs of the three convicts broken; the purpose being to hasten the death, and so the burial. Pilate complied with the sanguiniferous entreaty. Accordingly, the soldiers came and broke the legs of the two robbers. But when they came to Jesus they found, to their surprise, that He was already dead, and therefore they brake not His legs: and so was fulfilled a Scripture fifteen hundred years old—"A bone of Him shall not be broken." When we remember the tremendous events which had occurred during the last twenty hours—the sorrowful Passover, the parting counsels, the sleepless night, the bloody sweat, the traitor's kiss, the shameful arrest, the

The Crucifixion.
John xix. 31-38.

Ex. xii. 46.
John xix. 36.

hurried trials before Annas and Caiaphas and Pilate and Herod and Pilate again, the desertion by His disciples, the denials by Peter, the brutal scourgings and mockings and tauntings, the onset of the powers of darkness, the agony of imputed sin, the apparent desertion by His Father—we need not wonder that Jesus died so soon after His suspension on the cross. In the strictest physiological as well as moral sense—physiological because moral—“He died of a broken heart.”

The Pierced
Side.
John xix. 34.

John xix. 35.

1 John v. 6-8.

Zech. xiii. 1.

Toplady.

Nevertheless, in order to make His death absolutely sure, one of the soldiers rudely thrust his spear into the sacred side, piercing the very heart, and forthwith flowed blood and water. So profound was the impression made by this phenomenon on the one faithful apostle that he adds his emphatic testimony thus: “He that saw it hath borne witness, and his testimony is true, and he knoweth that he saith the truth, that ye also may believe;” and again, “This is He Who came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by the water only, but by the water and the blood: and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth: for there are three that bare witness, the Spirit and the Water and the Blood: and these three agree in one.” Yes, we are saved by the blood of Jesus. This is the one fountain that has been opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee:

Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side that flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

And now let us attend to a remarkable prophecy. Seven hundred years before the death of Jesus, the Evangelical Prophet, foretelling that death, also foretells His burial thus :

He made His grave with the wicked,
And with the rich in His death.

The Paradoxi-
cal Prophecy.

Isaiah lxx. 9.

Observe particularly the two-fold and even self-contradictory character of this prediction : it declares that Messiah was to be buried dishonorably, and yet honorably.

His grave was appointed with the wicked,
And with the rich in His tomb.

Glance, now, at some of the hazards on which the fulfilment of this paradoxical prophecy was hinged.

Hazards of the
Prophecy.

Notice, first, that Judea was at this time a Roman province. Accordingly, the Roman criminal code would prevail, except in cases especially provided for. The Roman custom required that the bodies of malefactors should remain on the cross till they were consumed by ravens and jackals, or wasted by decomposition. Accordingly, a guard was usually stationed around the cross to prevent any pitying hand from taking down the body and giving it honorable burial. Had the ordinary Roman custom prevailed in the case of

Jesus, His body would never have been buried at all. But, in that case, how could Isaiah's prophecy concerning the character of Messiah's grave have been fulfilled?

Notice, then, secondly, that the Jews had a law, ordained by Moses himself, which the Roman government allowed to stand in this case, which required that the corpses of criminals should be buried on the same day they were executed. "If

Deut. xxi. 22, 23.

a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt surely bury him that day (for he that is hanged is accursed of God), that the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance be not defiled." Accordingly, the Jews had a place of burial in the Valley of Hinnom for all who had suffered as malefactors: and to that burial-place they would now, goaded by hate, hasten with the body of Him Whom they had murdered.

Notice, thirdly, that there were special reasons why the Jews in this particular case would hasten to give the body of Jesus the shameful burial of the condemned. The first reason was that the next day was Saturday, or Jewish Sabbath; and the second reason was that this particular Sabbath was also the great Passover Sabbath, in some respects the most sacred day of the Hebrew year. We see then how all these circumstances conspired in prompting the Jews to hasten the ignominious burial of Jesus before sunset, at which hour their Sabbath began. And since He did not die till the

ninth hour, i.e., three o'clock in the afternoon, we see how extremely limited was the time in which measures could be taken to prevent the design of the Jews from being carried into effect, and, consequently, on how minute a pivot God balanced the fulfilment of a minute prediction uttered nearly a thousand years before.

Notice, fourthly, evidence is not wanting that the enemies of Jesus had already, as we have seen, actually begun their preparations for a speedy burial: for we are expressly told that "the Jews, because it was the preparation, that the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day (for that Sabbath was a high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away." Pilate, as we have seen, complied with their request. But when the soldiers came to Jesus, they found it needless to break His legs, for He was dead already. But to make the matter absolutely sure, one of the soldiers thrust his spear into the side so deeply that forthwith flowed blood and water, sign of a ruptured heart. And now, Jesus being actually dead, His body is ready for the malefactor's grave. Observe, let me repeat, the notation of time—after three p. m.: for the flight of every moment from now to sunset augments at a fearful rate the absolute impossibility of the fulfilment of Isaiah's prediction. Here the Jews are preparing to take down the body of Messiah, and bury Him with the robbers crucified with Him, thus in very fact appointing His grave with the wicked, and so fulfilling the first part of Isaiah's self-contradictory

John xix. 31.

prophecy ; but how then shall be fulfilled the other part of the same prophecy, that His tomb should be with the rich ?

Fulfilment of
the Proph-
ecy.

Observe, then, a most unexpected interposition of that Divine Being Who has been keeping that ancient prediction bright in His own remembrance ever since Isaiah was gathered to his fathers ; and, after having exposed it to almost an infinity of jeopardies during seven hundred years, now brings it out of the chamber of His memory, and once more delicately impinges it on the flight of a few moments ; for we are expressly told that the evening had come when the interposition was made. Observe, also, that although it was precisely effected, yet in the incidents by which the accomplishment was brought about, the sharpest eye can detect no trace of aught that approaches what men call supernatural. And now let us try to realize the scene. The sun is swiftly descending. How shall the body of Jesus be rescued from the grave among the wicked, whither frenzied Jews are hurrying to hurl it, and be honorably buried in a rich man's tomb ? Shall His disciples find Him a costly sepulchre ? But they are poor Galileans, without purse or sword, and their entreaties and tears will have little avail with the infuriate assassins ; besides, hours before, even in Gethsemane itself, they had forsaken Jesus and fled. Shall the weeping women who still linger by the cross ? But they are too weak to bear Him away, and surely there is no one in that frenzied mob to lend them a helping hand. Ah, help does come to them — help from the most unexpected, im-

probable quarter—from the fiendish Sanhedrim itself, that very Sanhedrim which only this morning has pronounced Jesus guilty of blasphemy, and extorted from Pilate the doom of the cross. When His own chosen apostles who had been openly following Him for three years have cravenly forsaken Him and fled, when a Judas has betrayed Him with a kiss, when a Peter has denied Him with oaths: a Jewish senator, whose name has never been publicly connected with Jesus, and a Jewish rabbi, who had stealthily visited Jesus under cover of night—these become the totally unexpected agents whom the Almighty employs to execute His own prophetic words. The story is best told in the simple language of the sacred narrators.

And when the evening was now come, lo, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, an honorable counsellor, a good and righteous man, who had not consented to their counsel and deed, who also was waiting for the kingdom of God, being himself a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews; this man, because it was the day before the Sabbath, came and went in boldly unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus, that he might take it away. And Pilate marveled if He were already dead; and calling unto him the centurion, he asked whether He had been long dead; and when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And having bought fine linen, he came and took down the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus (he who at the first came to Jesus by night), bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in fine linen cloth with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now, in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb,

Matt. xxvii. 57-
61.
Mark xv. 42-47.
Luke xxiii. 50-
56.
John xix. 38-42.

in which no one had ever yet been laid ; it was Joseph's own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock. There then, because of the Jews' preparation day, they laid Jesus ; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand ; and having rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, they went away. And the women also who had come with Him from Galilee, Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Jesus and others, followed after, and, sitting over against the sepulchre, beheld the tomb, where and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments.

Was not Isaiah's prediction—

His grave was appointed with the wicked,
And His tomb with the rich—

fulfilled to the very letter ? And yet on what a multitude of contingencies was this ancient prophecy dependent ! Suppose, for instance, that Jesus had suffered under the Jewish law instead of the Roman, having been stoned instead of crucified : or suppose that there had been no Joseph rich enough to own a tomb, or bold enough to beg the body of Jesus, or influential enough to prevail on Pilate to grant his request ; or suppose that he had been a few minutes later, or that Pilate had refused his entreaty, or that the Jews had learned of Joseph's design and thwarted him, or that the sepulchre had not been near the cross, or that some other untoward circumstance had happened—any of which suppositions is incomparably more probable than the strange blending of dishonor and honor in Isaiah's prediction. Suppose, I say, that any of these things had happened, then the whole fabric of Messianic prophecy would have suffered a fatal shock, or, rather, Jesus the Nazarene, Who

claimed for Himself that *all* Messianic prophecies centered in His own Person, would have been proved to be a false claimant—or pseudo-Messiah. Is not the Spirit of Prophecy the witness of Jesus?

Rev. xix. 10.

Thus was God's crucified Son, notwithstanding the fell designs of His murderers, allowed most honorable burial. In fact, His honors began the moment He died. From that moment the path of His glorification was onward and upward. The scourgings and buffetings of hate are exchanged for the tender ministries of love; the mock robe and scepter and crown for the costly shroud and myrrh and spice; the cross of disgrace for the tomb of honor. What though no stately bier is there to bear the blessed corse? Courtly hands are there to bear the sacred head and feet, and, gently wrapping it in costliest shroud and spicery, they worshipfully bury their reverend charge in a new-hewn sepulchre. And over against it, in the deepening night, still sit in unutterable grief saintly women who had ministered to Him in Galilee. Oh, if ever Love and Reverence were mourners, and such mourning be esteemed an homage, never was sepulture so regal as that of the Man of Sorrows! And meet it was that He should die and be buried in a garden; for, as it was in a garden that Sin and Death had been born, so it was in a garden that Sin and Death died.

The Tomb the
Cradle of
Christ's Hon-
ors.

But, although the enemies of Jesus are not allowed to dishonor the dead body of Him Whom they had murdered, they are allowed to continue their machinations. What though they had seen

The Guarded
Tomb.

Him laid away in the rock-hewn tomb, and the great stone rolled up against the door of the sepulchre? They felt the goadings of a guilty conscience, and so they were afraid even of a dead Jesus. Moreover, they remembered what He Himself many a month before had said to them, in reply to their demand for a sign from Heaven: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will rear it up." They had destroyed the temple, and now they feared that He Whom they had destroyed would rear again the temple in three days. And so on the morning after the sunset burial they hasten to Pilate, and say to him: "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said while He was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say unto the people, 'He is risen from the dead.' So the last error will be worse than the first." "Error," then, is it? Yes, better for this haughty, hypocritical, blasphemous hierarchy, notwithstanding all their jealousy and hate of the renowned Rabbi of Nazareth, that He should have still continued alive and taught as of yore, than that He should be crucified and *rise again*. And so, while the weeping and saintly women from Galilee arrest themselves in their own sacred office of embalming their dead Master in order that they may keep the Sabbath according to the commandment, these chief priests and scribes and elders and Pharisees, these paragons of righteousness who had so often denounced the dead Galilean as a Sabbath-breaker, these men

John ii. 18-22.

Matt. xxvii. 62-
64.

Luke xxiii. 56.

so holy that they feared they would contract defilement if the bodies of the crucified were allowed to hang upon the cross on the Sabbath, and therefore begged Pilate to hasten their death and burial by ordering their legs to be broken—these anointed guardians of the Sabbath themselves become, in the intensest sense, Sabbath-breakers, desecrating the holy hours by plotting against the dead body of Him Who Himself is the true and everlasting Sabbath. The careless, flexible Pilate again complies with their request : “Take ye a guard ; go and make the tomb as sure as ye can.” No sooner did they receive the order than they hastened out to the sepulchre, stretched a cord across the great stone which had been rolled up against it, stamped the ends with the imperial seal of great Cæsar, and stationed a guard of Roman soldiers. Ah ! was there ever such an awful Sabbath as that ? It was sad enough, God knows, to see Jesus on the cross, dying amid the jeerings of His murderers ; but sadder still to see Him lying waxen, motionless, dead, shrouded, entombed, while Roman sentries stand by with spear in hand to maintain inviolate the majesty of Cæsar’s seal.

John xix. 31.

Matthew xxvii.
65, 66.



THE
RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

REVELATION i. 18.



II.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

THE solemn, awful hours creep on. Morning dies into evening, and the Roman guard, spear in hand, are still pacing before the sepulchre, watching the imperial seal. The solemn, awful hours creep on. Evening dies into midnight, and the Roman guard, spear in hand, are still pacing, watching the imperial seal. The solemn, awful hours creep on. Midnight begins to retreat before the advancing day, and the Roman guard, spear in hand, are still pacing, watching the imperial seal. O God of Heaven! was there ever such a watch as that?

The Imperial Watch.

And now as it begins to dawn toward the first day of the week, while it is yet dark, lo! there is a great earthquake. And, lo! an Angel of the Lord, with appearance like lightning and raiment white as snow, descends from heaven, and, rolling away the stone, sits upon it. And, lo! the Roman guard, aghast at Cæsar's broken seal, shake with terror, their nerveless hands unable to grasp their spears, their bodies prone on the ground as the bodies of the dead. Why these

The Resurrec-
tion.
Matt. xxviii. 1-4.

amazing prodigies ? Why this trembling ground, this descending and dazzling angel, this rolling stone, this paralyzed guard ? Ah ! the Roman guard and Cæsar's seal and the rocky walls of Joseph's tomb are not stout enough to hold imprisoned Him Who is the Lord of Life and King of Glory. True, no mortal saw Him in the act of rising. It was God's favorite way of doing His choicest, divinest things. Meet was it that the Resurrection of His Son should take place in the majestic solemnity of an august solitude. But, although no one saw Him rise, or can tell the precise moment that He rose, there is one blessed thing that we do know : Some time during Saturday night the dead Jesus became the Risen Christ, stepping forth from His tomb the Conqueror of Sin and Death and Hell. That Resurrection henceforth and for ever abolished the Sabbath of the Decalogue, and consecrated Sunday to be our true Sabbath, even the Lord's own Day.

Rev. i. 10.

Charles Wesley.

“ Christ the Lord is risen to-day,”
Sons of men and angels say :
Raise your joys and triumphs high :
Sing ye Heavens, and Earth reply !

Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle won ;
Lo ! our Sun's eclipse is o'er ;
Lo ! He sets in blood no more.

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal :
Christ hath burst the gates of Hell :
Death in vain forbids His rise :
Christ hath opened Paradise.

Hail the Lord of Earth and Heaven!
Praise to Thee by both be given!
Thee we greet triumphant now!
Hail! the Resurrection Thou!

Yea, that Resurrection changed the trend of Consequences
of the Resur-
rection.
Eternity.

For, first, it gives us a certified Gospel, or accredited Salvation. The real battle between the Powers of Heaven and the Powers of Hell was fought not on Pilate's cross but in Joseph's tomb. We have seen how the battle was decided. At the pivotal moment Divinely appointed in the Drama of Time, the Son of Man, on Whose corpse the king of all lost worlds was sitting in ghastly triumph, uprose, and, toppling the Kingdom of Darkness, serenely stepped forth King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Then was the Son of David according to the flesh declared with power to be the Lord of David and the Peer of God. Then was the work of Adam undone, the curse uplifted, the everlasting Righteousness brought in, the Kingdom of Heaven begun. Then waved before the Ancient of Days the Pledge-Sheaf of the Harvest of the Church of the Resurrection. Then began the eternal reign of Him Who is all in all. Thus the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the pivotal fact of Christianity. It certifies beyond peradventure His Religion. The founders of other religions,—Confucius, Zoroaster, Brahma, Mohammed,—have died: but where is the evidence that they ever rose from the dead? It is the Resurrection of Christ which is the absolutely unique Fact of Christianity, the majestic demonstration

Rev. xix. 16.

Rom. i. 8, 4.

Luke ii. 10.

of its infinite certainty. This it is which proves it to be a Gospel indeed—Good Tidings of great joy unto all peoples. Accordingly, the Resurrection of Christ stands forth in the Apostolic theology as the epitome and very label of Christianity itself. And well it may: for it involves the whole Story of the Incarnation. He who has risen must have died, and he who has died must have lived, and he who has lived must have been born. Jerusalem's empty tomb proves Bethlehem's holy manger. And so it comes to pass that belief in the Resurrection of Christ is the touchstone of the Christian Faith, the key to the Kingdom of Heaven: If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Rom. x. 9.

Secondly: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ gives us a present, living, communing Saviour. For what after all was the Crucifixion worth without the Resurrection? What the Death without the Life? Let us take care lest in our devotion to the mighty doctrine of the Cross we make too little of the mighty doctrine of the Crown. We need not only the atoning work of Christ's historic death: we need also the sanctifying work of Christ's risen, present life. The Saviour we want is something more than a Divine statue, even though that statue be the crucified corpse of the Son of God petrified into heaven's own gold. We want the inspirations of a risen, exalted, vitalizing, loving, communing, Heavenly Friend. And this the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus gives us. If

Rom. v. 10.

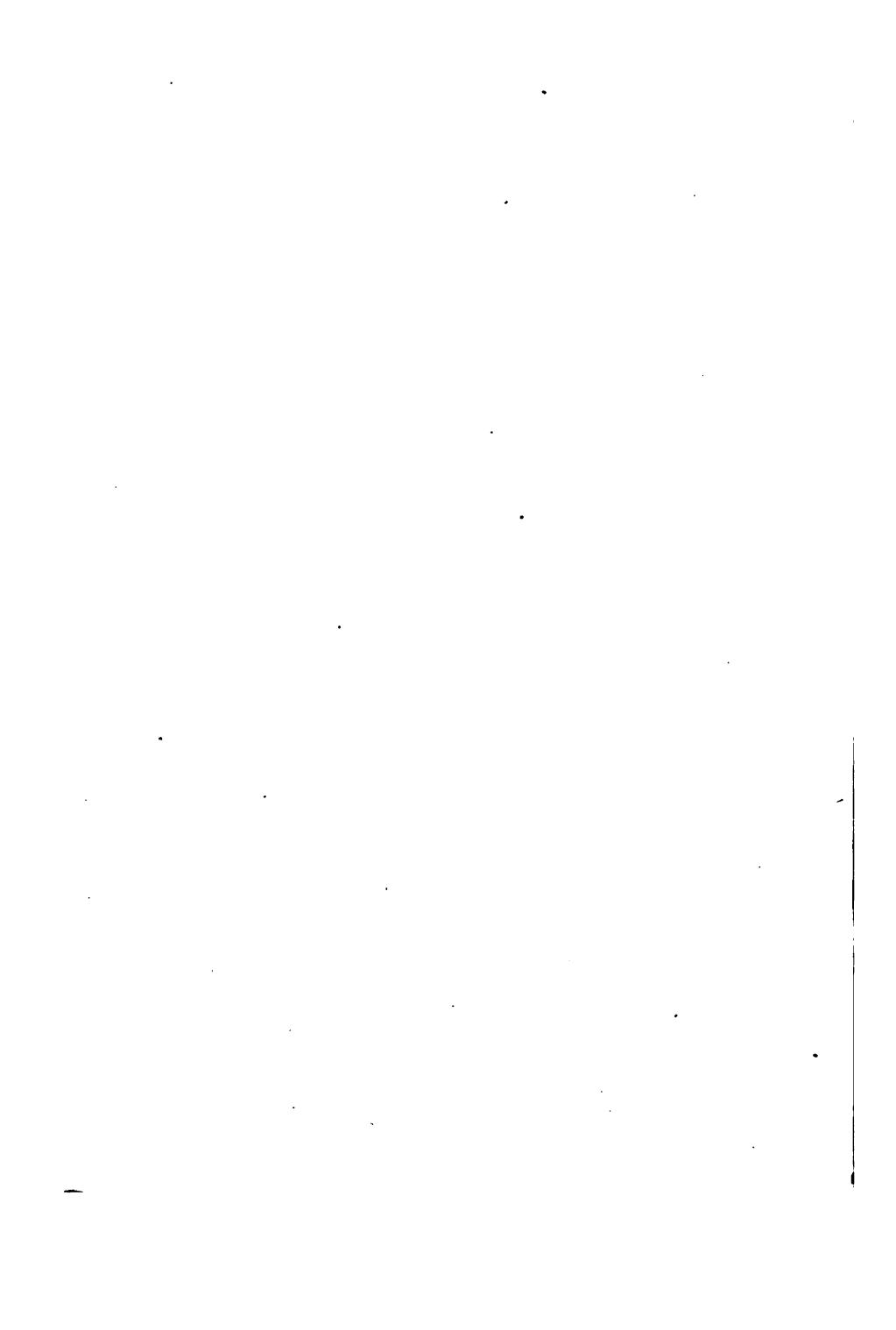
when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by His life. Because John xiv. 19. He lives we live also. No, ours is not the Church of the Entombment: ours is the Church of the Coronation. All hail then the Day which celebrates the Resurrection of the Divine Man! For that Resurrection means the birth and immortal growth of the Divine Man's Church. March forth then in exultant might, O Church of the First-born from the dead! Stride forth with mien Col. i. 18. elate and step triumphant. Thine is not a funeral procession, following with wail and coronach an embalmed Galilean: thine is a Triumphal Progress, following with bugle and pæan the Risen, Living, diademed Emmanuel.

O Thou Prince of Life and First-Begotten of Collect. the dead! Who, by Thy glorious Resurrection, hast overcome death and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; enable us, by Thy heavenly grace, to walk in newness of life and to abound in the fruits of righteousness, so that we may at last triumph over death and the grave, and rise in Thy likeness, having our vile bodies changed into the fashion of Thine own glorious body, Who art God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.

THE
EPIPHANY TO MARY MAGDALENE.

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils.

MARK xvi. 9.



III.

THE EPIPHANY TO MARY MAGDALENE.

BUT although Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, the august event occurred in such hallowed silence that none of His disciples has heard of it. Meantime the sorrowing women have resumed at earliest daybreak the sacred office of preparing to embalm the body of their dead Friend. What though He had already received at the hands of Joseph and Nicodemus most honorable burial ? He had done wonderful things for them during their happy days in Galilee, when they were permitted to follow Him and minister to Him of their substance. Although Hope has died, Love has not. Accordingly, when the honorable obsequies were over, and they had seen the great stone rolled up against the door of the sepulchre, they returned to their homes in the city, to prepare additional spices and ointments. But before they can complete their preparations Friday's sun sets, and the Jewish Sabbath is begun. Loyal to the commandment of Moses, they rest the twenty-four hours. And what a wretched Sabbath it is ! No sooner

The Sacred
Errand.
Matt. xxviii. 1.
Mark xvi. 1, 2.
Luke xxiv. 1.
John xx. 1.

Luke viii. 1-3.

has the sun gone down than they resume the work of completing their preparations for the anointing. At length all is finished. But night is again on the land. Slowly creep away the heavy hours. And now, as it begins to dawn toward the first day of the week, while it is still very early and dark, they start for the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared. We know the names of some of them: Mary of Magdala, and Mary the mother of Joses, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome the mother of Zebedee's sons, and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. As they journey in company, they anxiously ask one another, "Who will roll away for us the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" Strict observers of the Fourth Commandment, they had not stirred from their homes on the Sabbath, and so had not heard of the imperial seal and guard; had they heard of them, I fear that even they, brave as they were, might not have dared to approach the sepulchre. On arriving at the tomb, however, they see that the great stone has been rolled back.

Mark xvi. 3.

Mark xvi. 4.

The Horrible
Surmise.

No sooner does Mary Magdalene perceive this than instead of rejoicing her heart sinks within her. True, Jesus had often foretold His own resurrection as well as death. But she had never believed that He would really die, and this too on a shameful cross, much less then that He would rise again. And now that He has been suddenly and violently torn from her, all His promises of resurrection are sunk in the Lethe of grief. Accordingly, the sight of the rolled-away rock, in

stead of inspiring her with joy, awakens a horrible suspicion. Suddenly deserting her companions, she flies back to the city, and, hastening to Simon Peter and the disciple whom Jesus loved, she exclaims, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him!" How often that exclamation has been repeated since! When we have seen a skeptical scholarship turning the Holy Gospels into venerable legends, or a ceremonious ecclesiasticism flinging its gaudy mantle around the Nazarene, or an elaborate orthodoxy substituting creed for life, we too have exclaimed in our hearts: They have taken away the Lord from His throne, and we know not where they have laid Him.

Although the story of the Epiphany to the other women begins at this point, we will reserve it for a separate study, and proceed with the story of the Epiphany to Mary. The news she brings to Peter and John is indeed startling. No sooner do they hear it than they burst forth at their utmost speed for the sepulchre, leaving behind them the agonized, breathless Mary, to follow as best she may. John is younger and fleeter of foot than Peter, and arrives at the tomb first. Stooping down and peering into the vault as far as he can, he notices the linen shrouds, but he does not venture into the vault itself. Peter now arrives, and with characteristic impetuosity plunges into the tomb. He observes the linen cloths lying by themselves, and he also observes that the napkin which had enveloped the sacred Head is not lying with the shrouds, but is carefully folded up in

John xx. 2.

Peter and John
at the Sepul-
chre.
John xx 1-10.

a separate place by itself. Peter having thus ventured in, John now follows, and observes the same careful arrangement of the burial drapery. Light begins to break in on his susceptible, intuitive mind. He sees at a glance that no robber has broken into the sepulchre in order to rifle it, for all that was valuable in the tomb, except the sacred corpse itself, still remains. He is also convinced that no enemy of Jesus has stolen away the body, for the scrupulous arrangement of the burial attire is the work of a friend and not of a foe. All at once the eyes of his understanding are opened. The disciple whom Jesus loved is the disciple who first really sees the risen Jesus; for love does have its own peculiar, incomparable, undeceivable insight. In his own simple, sententious way John says of himself, "He saw and believed." But what can John do? What avails it that he believes that his Lord has risen? He knows not where He is or where to look for Him. All is still mysterious, unaccountable. And so, perplexed beyond measure, he and his friend Peter return to their own home.

John xx. 8.

Mary Magdalene at the Sepulchre.
John xx. 11.

Very soon after Peter and John have left, Mary Magdalene, overcome with excitement and her running to and fro between city and tomb, once more arrives at the sepulchre. She has not met Peter and John, nor the women on their return from the garden, perhaps because she and they had taken different streets and gates. And so on arriving at the tomb she finds herself alone. Poor woman! she is almost crazed with excitement and grief. What a host of reminiscences

come rushing across the memory of this agitated, solitary mourner!—reminiscences of mighty miracles, holy deeds, golden sayings, heavenly promises, and in her own case a matchless deliverance.

Luke viii. 2.

And now this beloved Friend Who has wrought these wonders and uttered these blessed sayings is dead. All the hopes which have been giving brightness to her life are crushed. He Who when journeying along the shore of Magdala had met her and pitied her and freed her from a tyranny worse than death; He Who had become her Friend when all others had recoiled from her in terror of her demon malady; He Who had raised Lazarus from the dead and proclaimed Himself to be the Resurrection and the Life—He Himself is now dead. Neither has He been permitted to die a natural death; He has been foully murdered, murdered amid lingering tortures and brutal buffettings and blasphemous jeers. Nor have His murderers been content with taking His life; they have pursued Him into His sacred burial-place, and stolen away His dear body—it may be still further to mangle and dishonor it. And so the poor, weeping, anguished woman hovers around the gloomy cave where she had seen the corpse of her dead Friend laid, and whither she had come in the early dawn to add more honors of embalming. She clings to the sacred spot even though she believes that the sepulchre has been rifled. The other women who had come with her, much as they loved Jesus, may forsake His tomb. Peter and John may do it the honor of a momentary visit. But Mary Magdalene will stay here; for

John xi. 25.

here is the holy spot where she had caught the last glimpse of her priceless, dead Friend.

The Vision of
Angels.
John xx. 11-18.

She therefore stands without the sepulchre weeping. She has not yet entered it or even looked down into the vault. Perhaps in her deep grief this had not occurred to her. But now, while hovering by the open door and still weeping, she stoops down and peers into the terrible vault. Her eyes meet a strange vision. Two angels in white are sitting the one at the head and the other at the foot where the body of Jesus had lain. They speak to her: "Woman, why weepest thou?" "Because," she mournfully answers, even as she had already told Peter and John, "they have taken my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." And having said this she turns away, refusing even angelic consolation.

The Ineffable
Recognition.
John xx. 14-18.

But as she turns, lo, she sees Jesus Himself; but she knows not that it is Jesus. Not having the slightest expectation that she would ever see Him again; preoccupied with the absorbing purpose of discovering the lost dead body bound in grave-cloths; her vision blurred with tears; her mind dulled by benumbing grief; the sublimed aspect of Christ's risen body—all these combine to prevent her recognition of Him. But the Risen Lord gently prepares her for the rapturous Epiphany: "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom art thou seeking?" Supposing naturally enough that the stranger is Joseph's servant and keeper of his garden, and fired with an all-absorbing purpose, she exclaims: "Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I

will take Him away." Taking it for granted that the stranger already knows the cause of her anguish, the frail woman, girded with the energy of a passionate grief, imagines herself strong enough to bear back the sacred body. And now comes the supreme ecstasy. The stranger does not bid her look at Himself and scrutinize closely. He does not even say: "I am Jesus thy Friend." He utters only one word; but He knows that this word will thrill her soul with heavenly melody. Jesus saith to her: "Mary!" Ah, that one word is enough. It is the soft echo of a delicious past. None but the Nazarene can pronounce that name or any other so celestially. The instant she hears it she bounds toward Him, and, prostrating herself, exclaims: "*Rabboni!* my Teacher!"

And now comes an unexpected, mysterious prohibition. Jesus saith to Mary: "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father." Why this singular reserve in Mary's case? Perhaps because her touch is too much the touch of an earthly, human love. It is as though the Lord had said: "Cling not thus to Me, Mary, in this passionate, earthly way. A nobler touch is in store for thee. The time is coming when under higher relations than these of earth thou mayest pour out thy love in truer services than these of a physical adoration. Touch Me not with this touch of a manual idolatry. For not yet have I ascended to the Father; not yet have I entered into those heavenly relations in which thou mayest touch Me indeed, with a nature glorified like My own. Wait then till I have ascended,

Noli Me Tan-
gere.
John xx. 17.

and the Spirit has come to prepare the way for My real presence, My true reign. Then will I come back in the spiritual body of My promised return ; and then thou shalt touch Me indeed.

The Fraternal
Message.
John xx. 17.

“ But go to My brethren, and say to them, ‘ I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’ ” “ Go to My brethren.” He Who has just vanquished the powers of darkness, nailing them to His Cross : He Who has just grappled with the arch-tyrant in his own sepulchral palace, and torn from him his diadem and shivered his throne and divided his spoils : He Who has raised Himself from the dead and in this very act demonstrated His own Godhead : He Who but an instant ago has forbidden Mary to touch Him as though naught but the finger of the glorified might come in contact with that celestial Form : He Who is about to ascend in pomp and great glory to the right hand of the Father Almighty to reign King of Kings and Lord of Lords, God over all, blessed for evermore : this is He Who sends a message to poor, lowly, despised Galilean fishermen, calling them “ My brothers.” Verily both He Who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying : “ I will declare Thy name unto My brethren, in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto Thee.” Yes, Mary, go to thy Risen Lord’s brethren, and repeat to them His message : “ Brothers, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.” And observe : He does not say : “ Our Father and Our God ” : but He says : “ My

Heb. ii. 11, 12.

Psalm xxii. 22.

Father and your Father, My God and your God." It is as though He had said: "My Father and therefore your Father: My God and therefore your God: being Myself God's Son, I am therefore your Brother." O Mary Magdalene, far greater is thine honor in being commissioned to convey these brotherly words than would have been the honor of being permitted to touch with passionate love and adoration the Man of Nazareth.

No sooner does Mary Magdalene receive this glorious message than she speeds as on the wings of the wind to bear it to the sorrowing disciples. Once before this morning has she flown, but it was as the messenger of woe: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." Now she flies again, but it is as the messenger of glad tidings of great joy: "I have seen the Lord, and He has spoken unto me." Alas, so intense was the grief of the young brotherhood, so profound their despair, that when they heard from Mary's own lips that He was alive and that she had actually seen Him, they believed not. What a powerful evidence this of the historic truth of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ! The very fact that they believed not is a reason why we should believe.

Such is the story of the First Epiphany of the Risen Lord. As it was in a Garden that the Tree of Life had been lost, so it was in a Garden that the Tree of Life was recovered. And since it was Woman who first sinned and so brought death into the world, meet it is that He

The Rapturous
Tidings.
John xx. 18.

Mark xvi. 11.

Mary Magdalene the First Witness of the Risen Lord.

Who is the Conqueror of Sin and Death should appear first of all to Woman. And since it was through Demon-hate that Woman fell, meet it is that He Who came to destroy the works of the Devil should appear first of all to her whom He had emancipated from demon thralldom. And so let us, with holy thanksgiving and homage to Him Who seeth the end from the beginning, and Who doeth all things well, accept the touching chronicle:

1 John iii. 10.

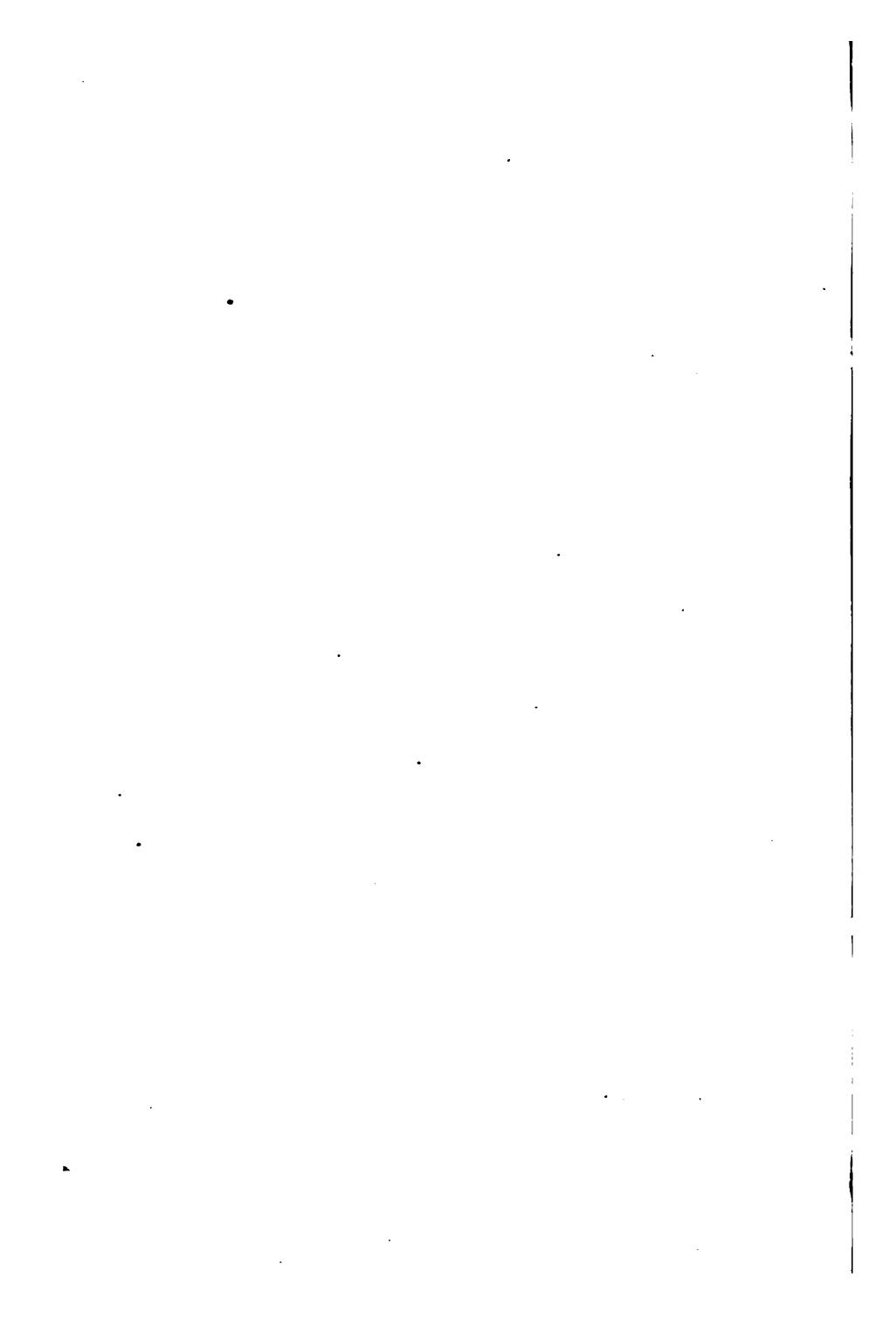
Mark xvi. 9.

“Now when He was risen early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.”

THE
EPIPHANY TO THE OTHER WOMEN.

And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word. And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshiped Him.

MATTHEW xxviii. 8, 9.



IV.

THE EPIPHANY TO THE OTHER WOMEN.

MEANTIME the other women, whom Mary Magdalene had suddenly left at the sepulchre in her flight to report to Peter and John the dreadful surmise of what she supposed to be a rifled tomb and stolen body, venture into the vault itself. They find to their dismay that it is indeed empty. Greatly perplexed, they suddenly see standing by them two angels in shining apparel. Startled and terrified, they bow down their faces to the earth. And now one of the shining ones speaks, saying: "Be not affrighted! I know Whom ye seek; it is Jesus the Nazarene, Who was crucified. Why seek ye the Living One among the dead? He is not here, but has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Remember how He spake unto you while He was still in Galilee, saying: 'The Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' Go quickly, and tell His disciples and Peter that He is risen from the dead. And, lo, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you. Lo,

The Vision of
Angels.

Matt. xxviii. 5-7.

Mark xvi. 5-7.

Luke xxiv. 8-7.

I have told you." Let us meditate on the angel's words.

Christianity
not a Reli-
gion of the
Sepulchre.

John x. 18, xi. 23.

Col. III. 1.

"Why seek ye the Living One among the dead?" There seems to be a slight tinge of rebuke in the question. It is as though the angel had said: "What has Life to do with Death? Do men gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles? The tomb is no place for Him Who said: 'I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it up again; I am the resurrection and the life.' He Whom ye seek is the Living One. Ye will never find Him among the dead. He is not here, but has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." And the angel's rebuke is as needful for us as for the women. For are there not times when we also seek the living among the dead? For example: What is this delving amid the rubbish of worldliness—amid the vanities and honors and riches and cares of this charnel-house of sin—but the seeking the living among the dead? If it be indeed true that we have been raised up with Christ, we shall be seeking the things which are above; where the ascended Christ is sitting on the right hand of God. Again: What is this searching for Christ amid the forms of ritual or the articles of orthodoxy, as though He were but a Name to be emblazoned in the illuminated letters of a rubric or a lay-figure to be found recumbent in a creed: what is this but the seeking among the dead for the Living One? Ah, Christ is not a creed, and so a Life; Christ is a Life, and so a creed. Once more: what is this constant dwelling on the passion and death of Jesus to the compara-

tive oblivion of His resurrection but the looking among the dead for the Living One ? That Jesus has risen from the dead is indeed a prominent article in our Confessions of Faith ; and in defense of that article we are ready to do battle against the denial of every skeptic and the surmise of every doubter. But that Jesus is alive again and alive for evermore is a fact too seldom held forth in conspicuous, blessed exhibition. We love to linger on the crimson soil of Golgotha as though the Son of Man were still hanging on His cross ; or, if we follow Him thence, it is only that we may gaze on His dead body in the sepulchre near by. And it is just because we spend so many of our days in sitting by that tomb, as though the great stone were still rolled up against its door and Pilate's seal still unbroken, that our Christian life so often seems to the unbeliever draped in the sable habiliments of mourning rather than in the bright attire of joy and praise. Some excuse there was for the weeping women in visiting the sepulchre. They had not expected their Friend's death ; much less then His resurrection. Well then may they weep, bringing their costly splices and precious ointments. Better come to embalm even a dead Jesus than to have no Jesus at all. But we do not have the excuse of these sorrowing women. We know that Jesus Christ has risen, not only because the Scripture says so, but also because nothing else than a Risen Jesus can account for the facts of Church History, for Christendom, for the transfiguration of human character, for the joys of a personal communion

with the Living One. If ever there was a fact proved, it is this: Jesus Christ has risen from the dead and is alive to-day. And yet how many Christians there are who really and devoutly love the Lord Jesus and would lay down their lives for Him, but who nevertheless are ever weeping and refusing to be comforted, their hands weary with the very weight of the ointments they are evermore bringing! No, ours is not the religion of the shroud; ours is not the Gospel of the Grave. Vain is it then for us to bring our balms and spices to a sepulchre, or to expect that the lamp of piety will glow in its noisome air. Let others, if they will, haunt the Tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. Let Greek and Latin, Armenian and Copt, kneel in the shrine of the Holy Sepulchre, lighting their tapers at the lamp which sends down its sickly glare on the spot where Jesus is supposed to have lain. Ours is a better Church than the Church of the Sepulchre. Ours is the Church of the Resurrection. Listen to the angel voice still echoing through the galleries of eighteen centuries: "Why seek ye the Living One among the dead? He is not here, but has risen, as He said."

Angelic Remembrancers.
Luke xxiv. 6, 7.

Matt. xvi. 21.

"Remember how He spake unto you while He was yet in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.'" The angel's allusion is doubtless to the memorable scene at Cæsarea Philippi, when Jesus began for the first time to show forth distinctly to His disciples His approaching destiny of death and resurrection. Observe precisely the way in

which the angel cheers these women. He works no miracle; he shows no scroll in the heavens with the blazing legend—"Jesus has risen"; he brings before them no vision of Christ's risen body. He simply remits them to past conversations of their Lord, simply recalling to their memory one of His forgotten sayings: "*Remember how He spake to you while still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be put to death, and rise again the third day.'*" And this recalling to our memory forgotten Scriptures I believe to be still a part of the angelic ministry. As it is one of the offices of the Holy Spirit to bring to our remembrance all things which Jesus has said, so, it may be, angels are the Holy Spirit's agents and messengers. What though we do not see them? Neither do we see the Spirit of God. I believe that angels wait on us, as truly as they ever waited on Abraham, or Jacob, or Joshua, or Elisha, or Mary of Nazareth, or the Lord Jesus Himself. I believe that they are still a part of Heaven's mediatorial economy; still ascending and descending on the Son of Man; encamping around them that fear Him, and delivering them; watching over Christ's little ones; rejoicing over repenting sinners; bearing the spirits of the redeemed to Abraham's bosom; in short, ministering to the heirs of salvation. And one of their special functions, as in the case of the angels of the sepulchre, is to be the ministers of the Holy Spirit to the Church, bringing to our remembrance also forgotten sayings of our

John xiv. 26.

John i. 51.

Pa. xxxiv. 7.

Matt. xviii. 10.

Luke xv. 10, xvi

22.

Heb. i. 14.

ascended Lord: "*Remember* how He spake to you."

The Angel's
Message.
Matt. xxviii. 7.

"Go quickly and tell His disciples and Peter that He hath risen from the dead; and, lo, He goeth before you into Galilee; there ye will see Him, as He said unto you; lo, I have told you." "Go quickly." No sanctuary for Christ's people is the tomb. Loiter not then in its gloom. Let Crusaders fight for and Saracens guard an empty sepulchre where a dead Jesus has once been entombed. The Church of the living God has a nobler work to do; it is to march from conquest to conquest under the banner of Him Who, once dead, liveth again, and, lo, He is alive for evermore. "Go quickly and tell His disciples and Peter." Yes, go to that poor Peter who, conscious of his unworthiness, had exclaimed, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"—that Peter who had ventured to walk on the foaming waves, and, beginning to doubt and sink, had cried, "Lord, save me!"—that Peter who, as adversary, had presumed to lay his hand on his Master, and rebuke Him, saying: "Be this far from Thee, Lord! this shall not be unto Thee!"—that Peter who, in the poverty of a feeble, undisciplined faith, had asked, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Until seven times?"—and again: "Lo, we have forsaken all and followed Thee; what then shall we have?"—that Peter who, in a humility very akin to pride, had exclaimed, "Lord, Thou shalt never wash my feet!"—that Peter who, in boastful confidence, had asserted: "Though

Rev. i. 18.

Luke v. 8.

Matt. xiv. 28-31.

Matt. xvi. 22, 28.

Matt. xviii. 21.

Matt. xix. 27.

John xiii. 8.

Matt. xxvi. 38-35.

all should be offended in Thee, yet will I never fall away ; though I should die with Thee, I will never deny Thee in any wise ! ”—that Peter who, the very night he had uttered these burning protestations, nevertheless had thrice denied his Master with oaths and curses—that Peter who, even now, is weeping bitterly over a lost discipleship and a dead Saviour. Yes, go quickly, and tell that same poor, distressed, conscience-smitten, sinful, despairing Peter, that his dear Lord has risen from the dead, and will meet him in his own loved Galilee, in whose Bethsaida he had been born, and on whose Gennesaret-strand he had left his net to follow the Christ and Son of the living God. “ Lo, He is going before you into Galilee ! there ye will see Him, as He said unto you.” Not to Gentile governor, nor to Jewish high priest, will the Son of man vouchsafe the glorious glimpses of His risen body ; but to lowly Galileans who had ministered to Him of their substance, and continued steadfastly with Him in His temptations, and followed Him whithersoever He went. Neither as a conqueror with laureled brow and triumphal chariot will He ride ; but as a shepherd, with crook and pipe, putting forth his own flock and going before them. Neither will He go to Bethlehem, where there had been no room for Him in the inn, nor yet to Jerusalem, where the only gift they had offered Him was a cross ; but He will go to humble, despised Galilee, the land where He had spent His childhood and youth, where He had gathered His apostles, where He had spent whole nights in prayer, and had been

Matt. xxvi. 69-74.

transfigured ; the land which had been the scene of parable and miracle and lowly grace. "Lo, He goeth before you into Galilee ; there will ye see Him, as He said unto you."

The Bewilder-
ing Joy.
Luke xxiv. 8.

Matt. xxviii. 8.

Mark xvi. 8.

The Second
Epiphany.
Ephes. iii. 20.

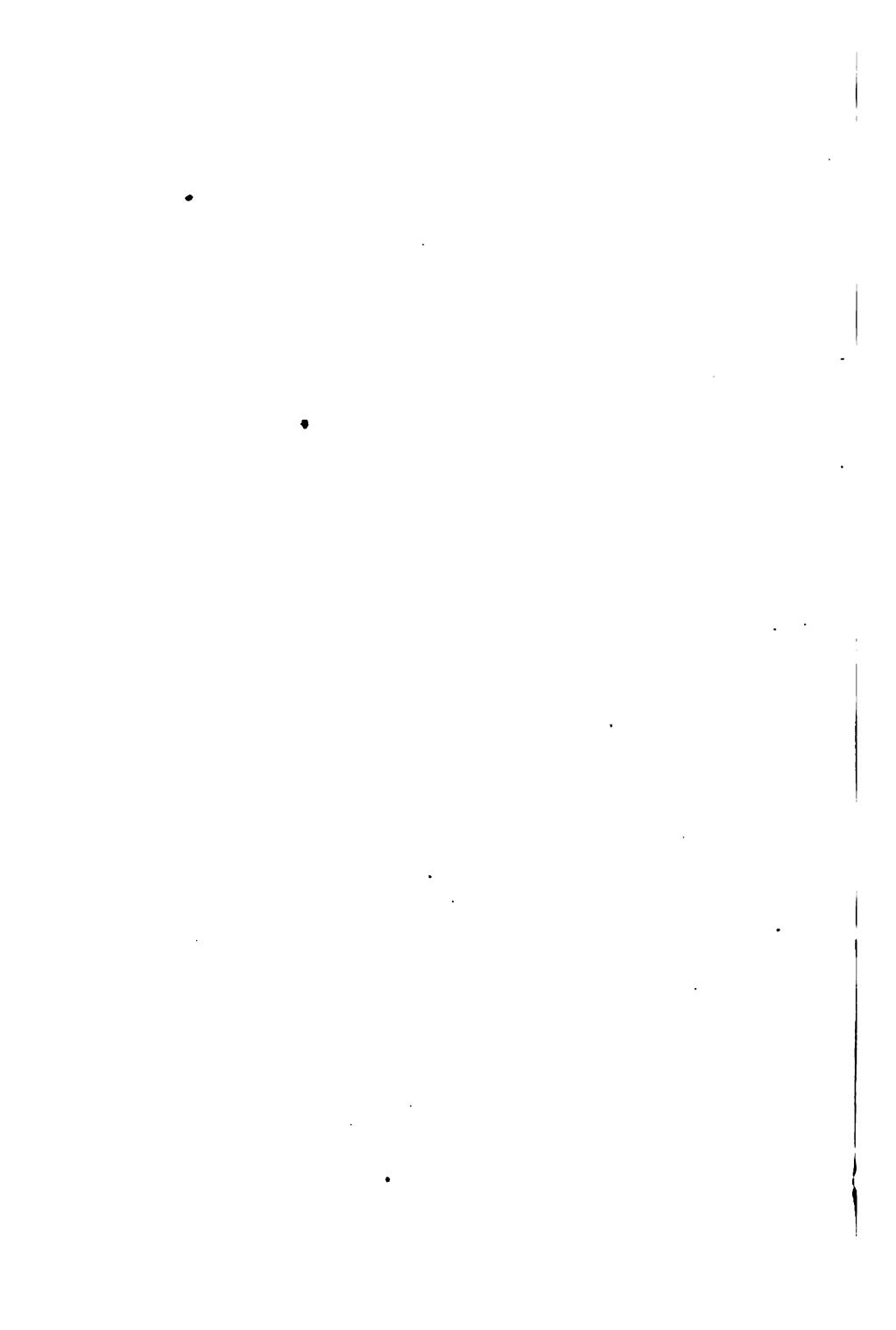
Matt. xxviii. 9,
10.

John xx. 17.

And they remembered His words. All the memories of the glorious past came flashing in on them. So suddenly and thrillingly was their hope revived that their very ecstasy filled them with nervous bewilderment. Fleeing from the sepulchre with fear and great joy, some of them ran with might and main to tell His disciples, becoming in their turn angels of good news, while others fled, trembling and amazed, saying nothing to any one, for they were afraid.

And now occurs one of those blessed instances of our God's being able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think ; for, on their way to the city, lo, Jesus Himself meets them, saying, "All hail !" It is Heaven's salutation to Earth. To this day the Risen Lord, whenever meeting one of His little ones, whether journeying to banquet or to funeral, joyously exclaims, All hail ! No wonder that when the agitated women heard that familiar voice and cheery salutation they prostrated themselves, and, reverently clasping His blessed feet, adored Him. There is less passionateness in their homage than in that which Mary had just offered, and therefore He graciously allows them the adoring touch which He had forbidden Mary. Nevertheless He has a great annunciation to make in Galilee, and to that He yearns ; and therefore He immediately repeats the mandate which the angels of the sepulchre a few minutes

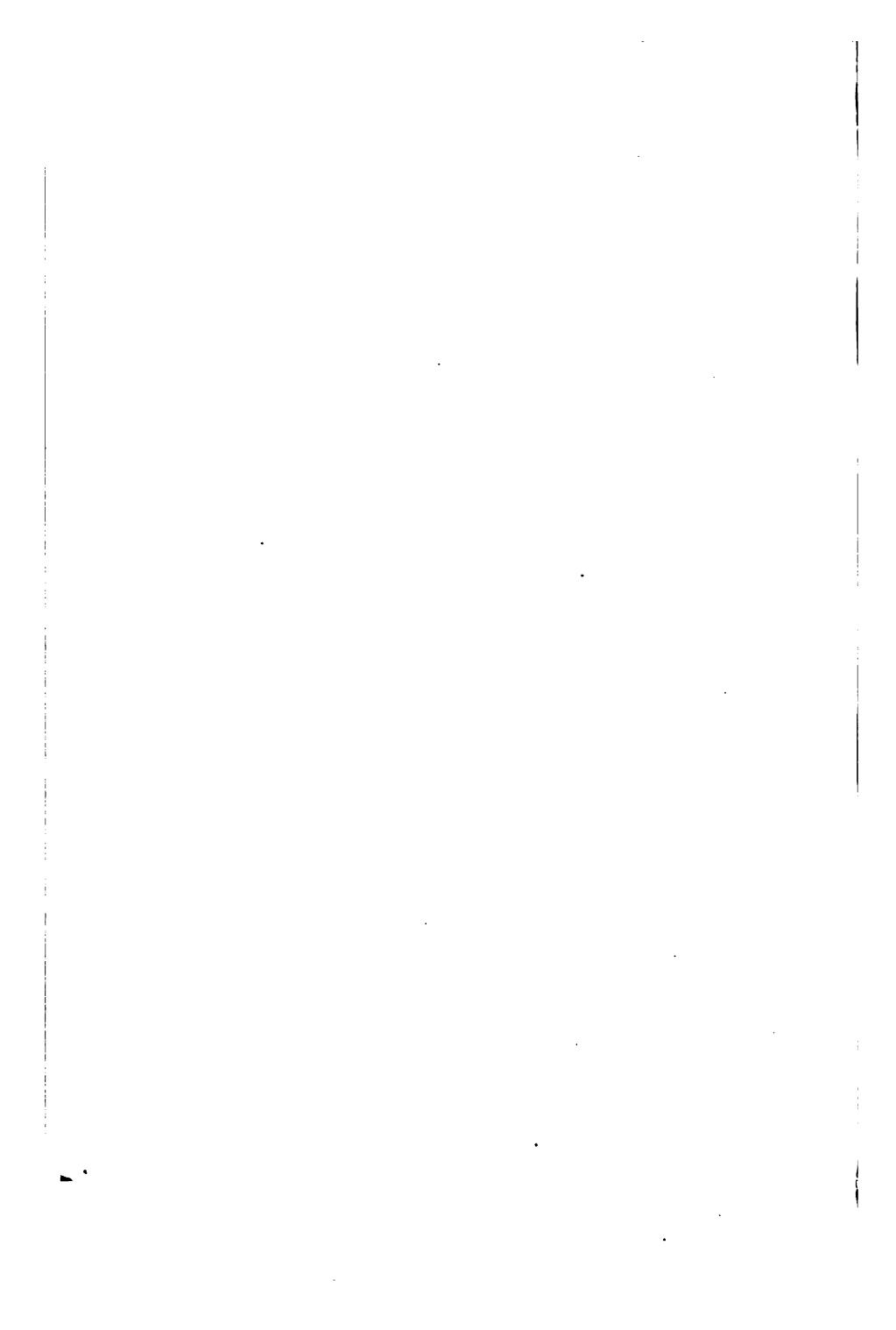
before had given : "Fear not ; go tell My brethren that they go away into Galilee, and there shall they see Me." It is the second recorded Epiphany of the Risen Lord. Heaven grant that each of us may also hear "All hail !" and recognize it as the Risen Lord's salutation !



THE EPIPHANY TO THE TWO.

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?

LUKE xxiv. 32.



V.

THE EPIPHANY TO THE TWO.

BUT these were not the only Epiphanies which the Risen Lord vouchsafed on that first Easter Day. During the course of this same Resurrection Sunday, two of His disciples were wending their way back to a village called Emmaus, about eight miles from Jerusalem. The name of one of these disciples we know—it was Cleopas ; the name of the other we know not ; enough that it is graven in the palms of Jehovah's hands, and perhaps we shall yet learn it in the day when the Lord of the Resurrection shall write up His peoples, exultingly reading off their names in the heavenly registry or Lamb's Roll of Life. As they walk along they sorrowfully talk and reason with each other about the strange things which have just happened at Jerusalem. Could we join their company, we should probably hear them talking and arguing (for one of them seems to be less despairing than the other) about the triumphal entry which had occurred just a week before, the last passover supper, the foot-washing, the parting counsels, the bloody sweat, the kiss of Judas, the arrest, the trials before Annas and Caiaphas and Sanhedrim and Herod and Pilate,

The Sorrowful
Dialogue.
Luke xxiv. 18,
14.

Isaiah xlix. 16.
Psalm lxxxvii. 6.

Rev. xxi. 27.

the suborned testimony, the choice of Barabbas, the sentence to death, the scourging and buffeting, the mock homage, the breaking down under weight of the Cross, the prayer for His murderers, the promise to the penitent robber, the partition of His raiment, the taunting blasphemies, the sacred bequest to John, the *Eloi! eloi! Lama sabachthani*, the dying thirst, the shout, “It is finished!” the dying commendation of His own spirit to His Father, the bowed head, the soldier’s spear-thrust, the awful darkness and earthquake and rent veil, the unexpected interposition of Joseph and Nicodemus, the honorable burial, the Roman seal and guard, the empty sepulchre, the strange rumors which had already begun to fly about the city as they were leaving it for Emmaus. In such sad converse as this, doubtless dwelling, as the bereaved are wont to do, on every minute detail of their dead Friend’s last hours, do Cleopas and his companion while away the hours as they plod on to Emmaus.

The Divine In-
cognito.

Luke xxiv. 15,
16.

John xx. 14.

John xxi. 4.

Mark xvi. 12.

And now a Stranger overtakes them and joins their company. It is even He of Whom they are speaking and reasoning. But they do not recognize Him. The same failure to recognize has already happened this morning to Mary Magdalene; it will again happen to the Seven on the shore of Gennesaret. Why they failed to recognize Him—whether the difficulty was in their own holden eyes, or in some change peculiar to His risen body—we have not been told. All we can say is, that this failure to recognize was in harmony with the mysterious character of the Forty Days.

Christ's risen body was a material body ; for it could be seen in space ; it could speak and walk and eat and exhibit scars. In these respects it was the same body as that which had been laid away in the tomb. At the same time it was a different body ; it was supernatural, that is to say, superior to known laws of matter, capable of moving with infinite celerity, gliding through closed doors, ascending from Olivet. The appearances of the Risen Lord were strictly Epiphanies, i. e., Divine Manifestations. This whole matter of the resurrection, spiritual body is still a profound mystery, which we may not expect to solve till we ourselves solve it in the blessed school of a personal experience. Meanwhile behold the risen but unrecognized Son of God walking with the sorrowing Two. Behold the Divine Incognito. And what happened then has happened unnumbered times since. The Risen Lord has walked with us, and we knew not at the time that it was the Lord. Lo, He went by us, and we saw Him not : He passed along, and we perceived Him not. Especially has it been so in times of affliction. With the patriarch of Uz we have exclaimed :

Oh, that I knew how I might find Him,
That I might come even to His seat !
I would order my cause before Him,
And fill my mouth with arguments :
I would know the words He would answer me,
And mark what He would say to me.

Job ix. 11.

Job xxxiii. 8-9.

And so we went eastward, and saw Him not ; and westward, and perceived Him not ; and northward, where He worketh, and beheld Him not ;

and southward, and found Him not. And when at length in the fourth watch of the night we did see Him walking as it were on the foaming surges of our own woes, and even drawing nigh to us, we did not know Him; but were affrighted, exclaiming, "It is a phantom!" Verily, His way is in the sea, and His path in great waters, and His footsteps are not known. What in the light of passing events seemed natural, becomes in the light of subsequent events supernatural :

*In Memoriam,
xxiv.*

And so the past doth often win
A glory from its being far,
And orb into the perfect star
We saw not when we moved therein.

A great art it is to detect the miraculous in the ordinary, the sacramental in the common, the Risen Lord perpetually about us :

T. H. GILL.

O Glory that no eye may bear!
O Presence bright, our soul's Guest!
O farthest off, O ever near!
Most hidden and most manifest!

*The Gracious
Question.*

Luke xxiv. 17.

John ii. 24, 25.

And now the Stranger speaks : "What words are these which ye are speaking so earnestly to one another as ye walk?" Why does He ask the question? For His own information? Most certainly not. For He knew all men, and needed not that any one should testify to Him of man; for He knew what was in man. Why then does He ask the question? Simply for their sakes, that He may gain access to their hearts. A great and blessed thing it is to be frank with our God, pouring out before Him in childish simplicity all

our griefs and wants. Here is the rich value of "Inquiry meetings"—meetings in which the minister not less than the troubled visitor is to be the questioner. Nothing so liberates the imprisoned soul as the opening the gates of speech. For so our Sorrowing Two found.

And yet at first they stood still, looking sad. Evidently they felt annoyed by the interruption, and for a moment kept moody silence. But presently Cleopas, greatly surprised, answered : "Art thou sojourning alone in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which have come to pass there in these days ?" It is as though he had said : "Hast thou come up to the Passover alone, sojourning in Jerusalem as a hermit ? How else couldst thou have been ignorant of the wonderful things which are on every one's tongue ?"

"What things ?" gently persists the Stranger, still inviting them to unburden their hearts. And now they proceed to unfold their tale of woe. "What things ' dost thou ask us ? Concerning Jesus the Nazarene, Who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people ; and how our chief priests and rulers delivered Him up to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He Who was to redeem Israel. Moreover, besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, who were early at the sepulchre ; and when they found not His body they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said that He was alive. And some

The Disciples' Surprise.
Luke xxiv. 17, 18.

The Mournful Tale.
Luke xxiv. 19-24.

of them that were with us went to the sepulchre and found it even so as the women had said ; but Him they saw not." Simple souls ! What information they fancied they were giving their unrecognized Companion ! How artless and to us even foolish their sorrowful tale ! It is very difficult for us to realize their position. To us the story of the crucifixion and resurrection has been familiar from infancy. But to them these events had come as unexpectedly as an earthquake. Go back these eighteen hundred years, and try to realize their situation. They had been up to the Holy City to attend the Passover. Doubtless they had gone up blithely ; for the Passover, commemorating as it did the miraculous deliverance of their fathers from the bondage of Egypt, was the great festal day of the Jews. Moreover, the disciples of the Nazarene seem to have looked forward to this particular Passover with special anticipations of joy. They felt that the long yearned-for hour had come when their illustrious Master and Friend would ascend the throne of David, and actually redeem Israel, an expectation deepened by the triumphal entry of only the Sunday before. But how suddenly and terribly had they been disappointed ! Instead of the acclaim they had seen the arrest ; instead of the imperial purple, the mock scarlet robe ; instead of the crown of gems, the mock crown of thorns ; instead of the golden scepter, the mock reed ; instead of the homage, the mock genuflection ; instead of David's throne, Joseph's tomb. All this was an unspeakable shock to their patriotism, their piety, their love, their

trust ; for now they had lost both the Divine Christ and the human Jesus. And the shock was all the more unbearable because of its earthquake suddenness. True, Jesus had often foretold His own death and resurrection ; but His words had always fallen on them unheeded ; they never had imagined that He would really die and be buried and rise again. True, before leaving town this morning they had heard wonderful rumors about an empty sepulchre and visions of angels who declared that He was risen. But they gave no credit to these rumors, supposing them to be but the fancies of excited women. And so they plod on and sigh and weep over the irreparable loss of One Who, as they had hoped, was about to have redeemed Israel.

And here the Stranger, as though impatient with their stupidity and perverseness in not understanding their own Scriptures, breaks in : " O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken ! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory ? " And, beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. " O fools ! " And well may He call them so. Nothing is so stupid as the unbelief which springs from the failure to understand the law of moral progress : first suffering, then blessedness ; first defeat, then victory. What these disciples doubted was not the glory, that was easy to believe : they doubted the suffering. And yet a suffering Messiah was in a conspicuous degree the theme of

The Matchless
Exposition.
Luke xxiv. 25-
27.

Rev. xiii. 8.

Evangelic Prophecy: witness the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. In fact, the idea of a suffering Christ, a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, gives a deep crimson tinge to all the Old Covenant, running as a scarlet thread through the whole system of ancient prophecy. Had these disciples but understood their own Scriptures, they would have foreseen, from the beginning, Cross and Tomb. In fact, the cross was the condition of the crown, the tomb the condition of the throne. Listen to the Master Himself: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit; and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." Ay, thus it is written, and thus it behooved the Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day. And just because Messiah's cross was the condition of Messiah's throne, the Messianic prophecies are red with an ensanguined Christ; the prophetic necessity grows out of the moral. Christ did not die in order to fulfill prophetic Scripture: Scripture was prophetic of Christ's death because that death had been doomed in the very nature of God and of man. The "ought" was prophetic because it was a moral ought. "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And it is as true for us as it was for Him. There is no ascending into Heaven except from out of the tomb of our own slain selves. The cross is the only ladder high

John xii. 24.

John xii. 32.

Luke xxiv. 46.

enough to touch Heaven's threshold. The cross makes the only true *scala santa*—

The great world's altar stairs
That slope through darkness up to God.

In Memoriam, lly

And beginning from Moses and all the Prophets He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Doubtless, He began with Eden itself, explaining the Seed of the Woman, the Covenant with Abraham, the Paschal Lamb, the Exodus out of Egypt, the Angel of the Covenant, the Shekinah, the Tabernacle, the Mercy-Seat, the Day of Atonement, the Manna, the Rock, the Brazen Serpent, the Star of Balaam, the Throne of David, the Immanuel of Isaiah, the Messiah of Daniel. Thus He, so to speak, Christianized all the Old Testament, pointing out everywhere His own footsteps, and signs manual, and personal lineaments. Oh, what an expository sermon that must have been! How new the old words! What would we not give could we have listened to Him! What would we not give could He enter our homes to-day, and explain to us not only the Old Testament but also the New! Thank God, He does visit us. The Paraclete, even the Spirit of Truth, Whom the Father promised to send in His name, has come, teaching us all things, bringing to our remembrance all things which Jesus has said, bearing witness of Him, guiding us into all the truth, showing us the things to come, receiving that which is Christ's and showing it unto us: so that we ^{1 John ii. 20.} may know all things. He that hath an ear, ^{Rev. ii. 7.}

John xiv. 16, 26;
xv. 26; xvi. 13,
14.

let him hear what the Spirit is saying unto the churches.

The Sacred
Importunity.
Luke xxiv. 28.
29.

Luke xviii. 37.
Mark vi. 48.

Rev. iii. 20.

Jer. xiv. 8.

And now our travelers have almost reached the village whither they were going, and the Stranger makes as though He would go farther. Does He intend to deceive? Perish the thought. He is perfectly sincere, and doubtless *will* go farther unless they detain Him. There is a solemn sense in which it is perpetually true that Jesus of Nazareth is passing by. When we are tempest-tossed, He will walk toward us on the waves: but, unless we invite Him into our ship, He will pass by us. He stands at the door of our hearts, and knocks once, twice, thrice: but, unless we open the door, He passes on. He walks with us for a while, and expounds to us the Scriptures concerning Himself: but, unless we invite Him to tarry with us, He passes on. The Risen Lord stays only with the hospitable. And the disciples did constrain Him, saying: "Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." Abide with us. It is a prayer which befits every tongue and heart. The most prosperous household is poor unless Jesus abides with us. The most desolate household is rich if only Jesus is the constant Guest. The most lonely waif is opulent in friendship if only Jesus is Companion. O Thou Hope of Israel, Thou Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why art Thou as a stranger in the land and as a traveler that turneth aside to tarry but for a night? Come in, come in, Thou Blessed One! Stay, oh, stay with us, Thou Risen Lord!

H. F. Lyte.

Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide:
The darkness deepens: Lord, with me abide!

While other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh abide with me!

I need Thy presence every passing hour:
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, oh abide with me!

Yea, abide with us: for it is toward evening and the day is far spent. So have ten thousand aged saints exclaimed. And well they may. The silvery locks, the bent figure, the uncertain gait, the dimmed eye, the tremulous speech: all attest that the sun of their life is fast westering. Well then may they exclaim: Abide with us: for it is toward evening and the day is far spent. Nor does this prayer befit the aged alone: it befits even the young. It may be, O youth, that He in Whose hands thy breath is has decreed that thy day shall be a short one and that even now thy evening shall come. It may be that this very night thou shalt go to thy long home, and thy friends shall mourn for thee, saying: Alas, the silver cord is loosened, and the golden bowl is broken, and the pitcher is broken at the fountain, and the wheel is broken at the well. Pray then the blessed Lord to come in and abide with thee.

Ecccl. xii. 6.

Tarry with me, O my Saviour,
For the day is passing by:
See, the shades of evening gather,
And the night is drawing nigh.

Deeper, deeper grow the shadows,
Paler now the glowing west:
Swift the night of death advances:
Shall it be the night of rest?

Feeble, trembling, fainting, dying,
 Lord, I cast myself on Thee :
 Tarry with me through the darkness :
 While I sleep, still watch by me.

Tarry with me, O my Saviour !
 Lay Thy head upon my breast
 Till the morning, then awake me —
 Morning of eternal rest !

The Blessed Response. Nor did the disciples appeal to the wonderful Stranger in vain. He who had made as though He would go farther gladly yielded to their suit and went in and abode with them. Blessed be His glorious Grace, it is still so to-day. He still loves the siege of His people's importunity, and still joyously capitulates to every kneeling suitor. That prayer, Abide with us ! will ever conquer.

The Rapturous Recognition.
 Luke xxiv. 30, 31.

Eph. iii. 20.

And now comes the rapturous recognition. It came to pass as He sat at meat with them, He took the bread and blessed it and brake and gave to them ; and their eyes were opened, and they knew Him. It was another blessed instance of His being able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think : they had begged the mysterious Stranger to tarry with them for a night : the mysterious Stranger in complying with their request suddenly revealed Himself as their crucified, buried, risen Friend. How was the recognition effected ? We know not. Perhaps as He lifted up His hands to bless the bread they saw the print of the nails. Perhaps His taking the bread and blessing it and breaking it and giving it to them recalled an idiosyncrasy of His, as when He had

done the same thing on the two occasions on which He had fed the famishing thousands, and on the occasion of His instituting the sacred Feast which bears His name. All we know is that He became known to them in the breaking of the bread. But no sooner had He revealed Himself to them than He vanished out of their sight. It has happened so countless times since. There are hours when we also are vouchsafed visions of the glorified Lord: and, Peter-like, we too would fain build on the spot a tabernacle for the Shining One, that we may detain Him for ever. But as it was with Peter, so it is with us: as long as there is in the valley below a lunatic child who needs our help, we must not stay on the Mount of Transfiguration. In this poor world of ours, at least until the Risen Lord returns, we are permitted only Beulah glimpses of the far-off land and the King in His beauty. Nevertheless each glimpse is prophetic of the return and everlasting presence of the ascended Immanuel. Then, when the Tabernacle of God shall again be with men, we shall indeed eat bread with Him in an eternal Emmaus. And when He had vanished the disciples said one to another: "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the way and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" Oh, there is no inspiration so blissful as that of a personal communion with the Risen Lord, no enthusiasm so fervid as that which the Risen Lord enkindles when He opens to us the Scriptures.

And they rose up the same hour and returned to Jerusalem. What though it was already night,

Matt. xiv. 19, xv.
36, xxvi. 28.

Matt. xvii. 1-18.

Isaiah xxxiii. 17.

Rev. xxi. 8.

Luke xxiv. 32.

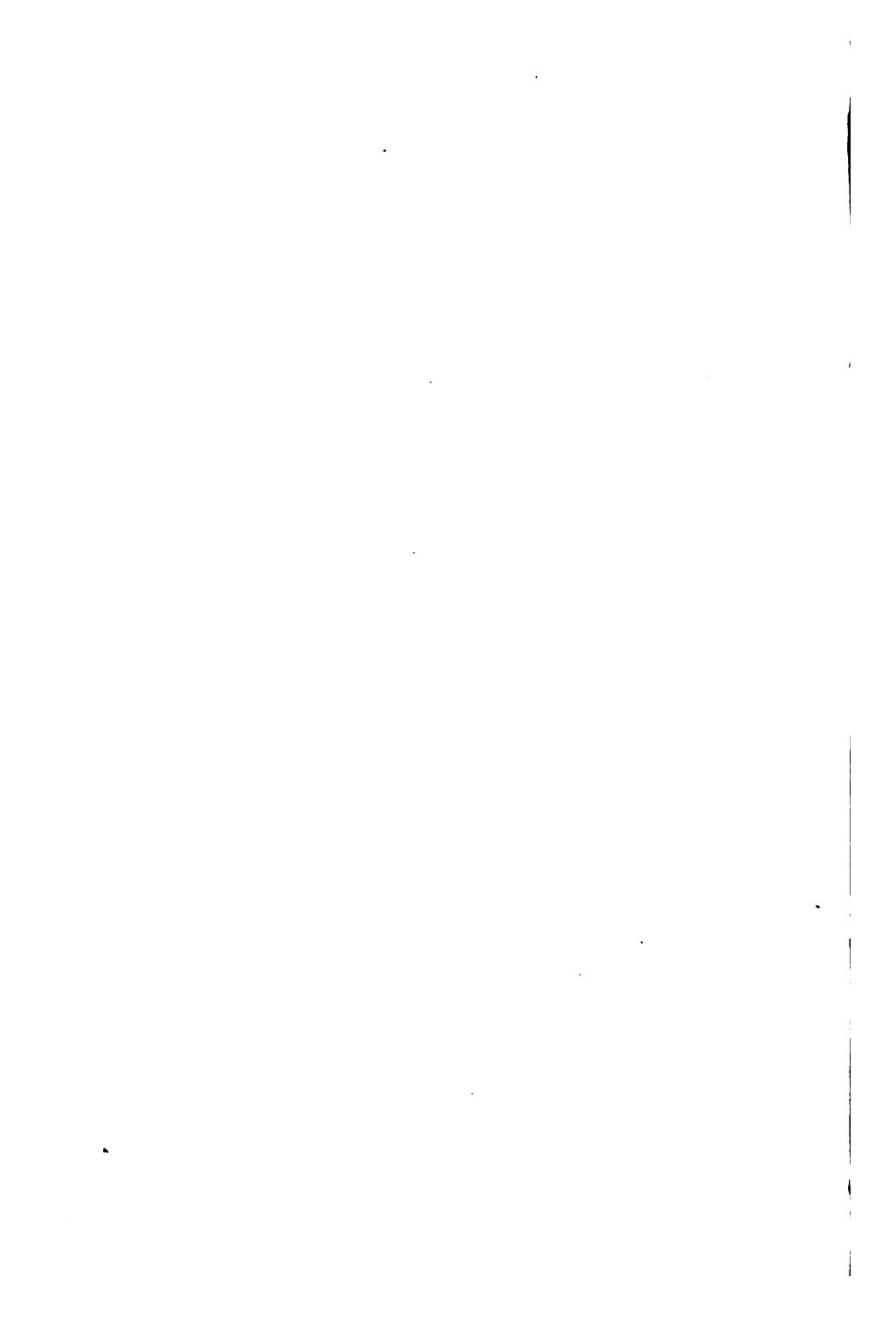
Phone and An-
tiphone.
Luke xxiv. 83-
85.

and Jerusalem was eight miles distant ? They had left there sorrowing friends, and they yearned to tell them their own good tidings of great joy. Blissful enthusiasm like theirs knows no obstacles. And so with swifter footsteps than those with which they had just left the Holy City they returned thither. Nor were they in doubt where to look for the brethren. They felt sure they would find them in a wonted place. And so, swiftly threading the streets, they knock at the

Mark xiv. 18-16. door of a well-known house ; it may be the Guest-chamber, where the Master had celebrated His last Passover, or it may be John's own home, where the Virgin Mother is now the blessed inmate.

John xix. 27. Nor are they mistaken as to the gathering of the young brotherhood. But no sooner is the door opened than their own glorious news is anticipated by a rapturous exclamation from those within : "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon !" Think not, O Mary Magdalene, or O Cleopas and the nameless one ! that the Risen Lord is exclusive or chary in His Epiphanies. He is now practically ubiquitous, and, while He is appearing to the Teloogoo in Antipodes, He is also appearing to me. And so the Church's music is ever phone and antiphone : this one shouting, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to me !" and that one answering, "Risen indeed is the Lord, and to me hath He appeared !" And they told the things that had been done on the way, and how He had become known to them in the breaking of the bread. Not that the Supper at Emmaus was in the technical, ecclesiastical

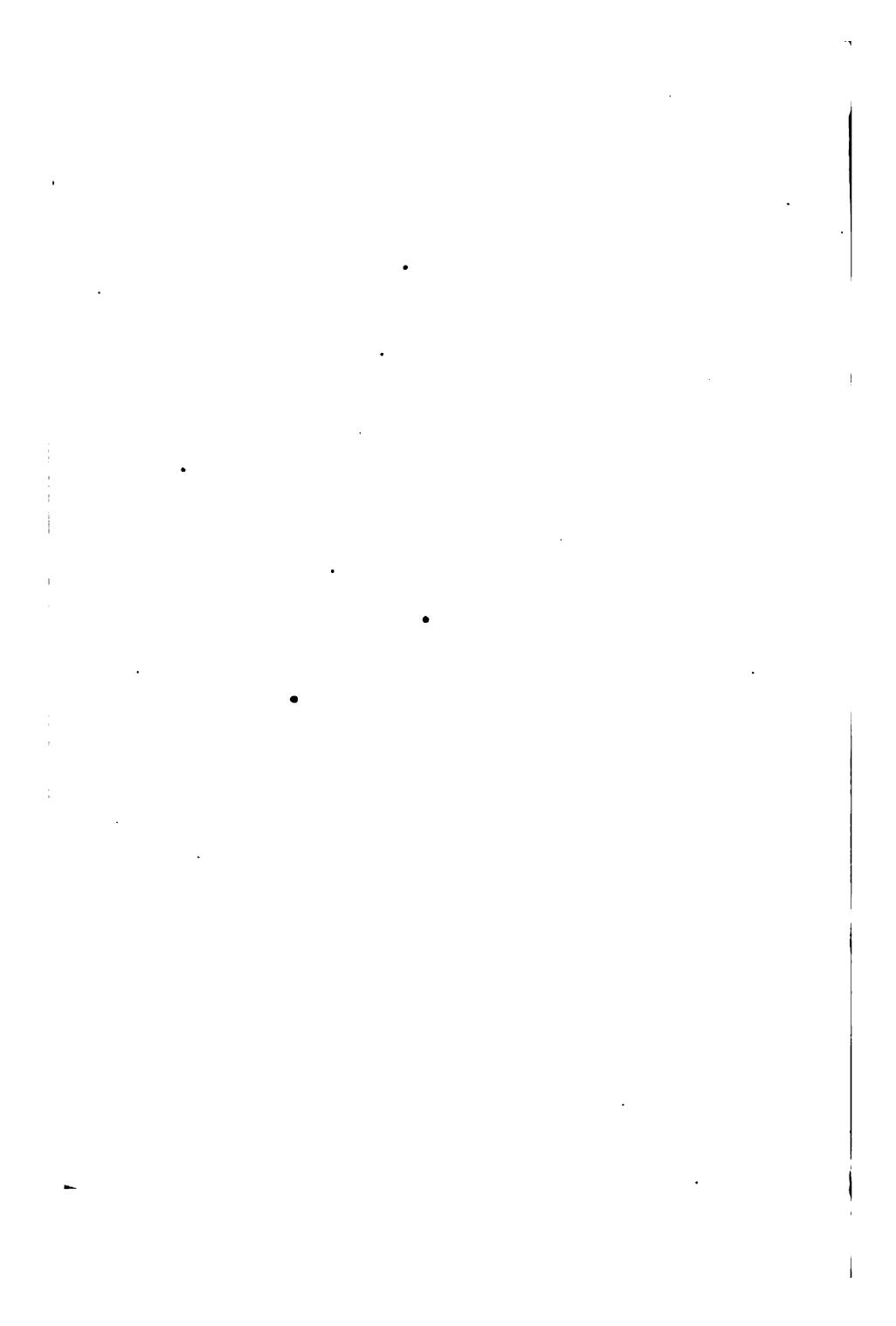
sense "The Lord's Supper." Yet in the truest, abiding sense it was the Holy Communion. For wherever the Risen Lord is, there in deepest truth is the Sacrament. But although the new comers declared that they too had seen the Risen Lord, the other disciples did not believe them. Perhaps their unbelief sprang from their notion of a physical impossibility: "It can not be that He appeared to Simon here at Jerusalem and at the same time to you at Emmaus." In all events, they refused to believe any one except their own Simon Peter: "He hath appeared unto Simon." Mark xvi. 18.



THE EPIPHANY TO THE TEN.

Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken, He shewed them His hands and His feet.

LUKE xxiv. 38-40.



VI.

THE EPIPHANY TO THE TEN.

AND now, even while they were thus conversing and arguing, the doors having been shut for fear of the Jews, Jesus Himself suddenly appears in the center of the group, saying, “Peace be unto you!” The doors having been closed for fear of the Jews: what a glimpse this allows us into the perils of the young Brotherhood! Already is their Master’s own saying, uttered on the night of the betrayal, fulfilled: “The servant is not greater than his lord: if they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.” Observe: as it was the hierarchical party of the Jewish estate which persecuted the infant Church even down to the close of Paul’s career, so, with shame be it confessed, it is the ecclesiastical element of society which since the time of Constantine has been the chief persecutor of Christ’s Church. And if in our own age and land we are worshiping no longer with closed doors, but openly, in absolute freedom of action and conscience, it is because we are living in the land wherein Roger Williams more than two centuries ago bravely reasserted Christ’s own

The Sudden
Epiphany.
Mark xvi. 14.
Luke xxiv. 36.
John xx. 19.

John xv. 20.

Acts. xxiv. 1-9.

doctrine of Soul-Liberty. But what though those ancient doors were closed ? The Risen Lord glided through them as easily as light through crystal. Respecting the unique character of Christ's risen body, I have already said something, and shall have more to say a little further on. Meantime observe that His sudden advent in that little gathering of His disciples was a beautiful fulfillment of one of His own precious sayings: "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." It matters not how numerous or wide apart these gatherings are: they may be simultaneous gatherings in Philadelphia, and London, and Alexandria, and Melbourne: enough that they are gatherings in Christ's Name: and, lo ! He is present at them all. And He said to them, "Peace be unto you !" It was and had been from the time of the Patriarchs the characteristic salutation of the Jews, being enshrined in the very name of their Capital City—Jerusalem, i. e., Possession of Peace—and surviving in the "Salaam ! Salaam !" of the modern Arab, even as the ancient Hebrew had been wont in meeting and in parting to exclaim, "Shalom ! Shalom !"—"Peace ! Peace !" What though Jesus the Nazarene is the risen Son of God ? He is still a man and a Jew, and so He still speaks the language of His people according to the flesh. Moreover, and better than any local or transient consideration, Jesus Christ is Himself the Prince of Peace. The night He was born, a multitude of the heavenly host praised God, saying: "Glory to God in the highest ! And on earth,

peace, good will toward men!" And the last night He was on earth as the Man of Sorrows, He left to His disconsolate disciples His own priceless legacy, saying: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you." No wonder, then, that the Prince of Peace, although now in His risen, heavenly estate, still says to His Church, "Peace be unto you!" Ay, Peace ever has been and still is and ever will be, world without end, the watch-word of the Mediator's Kingdom, the very Shiloh of the Peacemaker's Church: Peace with God, Peace with Man, Peace with Self. No wonder the Apostolic Epistles begin and end with Christianity's countersign: "Grace and Peace be unto you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ."

John xiv. 27.

But, although the Risen Lord greeted the disciples with His customary salutation, His greeting was blended with holy chiding: He upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not those who had seen Him after He was risen. And well might He upbraid them. In addition to the moral necessity of His resurrection, as grounded alike in the prophetic Scriptures and in the very constitution of the spiritual life, He had been seen four times that day: He had been seen by Mary Magdalene in the garden, by the other women near the sepulchre, by Simon Peter, by Cleopas and his companion. Surely it ought to have been easier for the disciples to believe the testimony of Christ's friends that He had risen than to believe the tes-

The Holy Chiding.

Mark xvi. 14.

timony of Christ's foes that His body had been stolen: easier to believe in Christ's own power than in the power of His enemies. The refusal to believe in Christ's resurrection was indeed a painful instance of unbelief and hardness of heart.

The Sudden
Terror.
Luke xxiv. 37.

Matt. xiv. 26.

The Gracious
Demonstra-
tion.
Luke xxiv. 38-40.

And now in addition to these four testimonies to His resurrection they have the demonstration of their own eye-sight. But instead of believing and exulting, they are terrified and affrighted, and imagine that they are beholding a specter. It is the same superstitious terror which had seized them months before when they saw Jesus walking over the waves, and were affrighted, and cried out: "It is a phantom!" Believing that He was still dead, and suddenly seeing Him standing before them—the doors being still closed—they are terror-stricken, and fancy that they see His ghost.

And now observe the beautiful tenderness with which the Lord soothes and convinces His disciples. Jesus saith to them: "Why are ye troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself! handle Me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet and His side. What a touching instance of patience and condescension and love! He does not turn away angrily. He indulges in no denunciation. He pronounces no oracular, magisterial *ipse dixit*. He employs no syllogism except the practical syllogism of factual experiment. Directing their attention to His nail-scarred hands and feet and His spear-pierced side, He

calmly says: "Behold My hands and My feet and My side, that it is I Myself! handle Me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have." What a lesson for all parents, teachers, and preachers! Instead of dogmatic *ex cathedra* deliverances, how much wiser and more effective to reason patiently and tenderly, illustrating our teaching by our own personal example! To prove to others the truth of what we are saying by allowing them the demonstration of a personal sight and touch and experience is worth a thousand syllogisms. Observe also what light is shed upon the nature of Christ's risen body by His invitation to His disciples to examine Him and touch Him. They were terrified and affrighted, imagining that they were beholding a spirit or specter. He reassures them by submitting the question of the materiality of His body to the test of ocular scrutiny and the still more decisive test of actual touch. "Do ye think that I am only an apparition? Scrutinize Me more closely. Look at My scarred hands and feet and side, that it is actually I Myself. Handle Me, and see: for a spirit or phantom hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." Perhaps it was a personal reminiscence of this very scene when the Apostle John, writing many years afterward against Docetism or the heresy which taught that Christ's humanity was only apparitional or seeming, speaks of Him as One Whom he had seen with his eyes, Whom he had gazed upon, Whom his hands had handled. However this may have been, one thing is certain: Christ's proffered test of touch

in the matter of the veritableness of His risen body was a perfectly sincere proffer ; He meant that it should be accepted as the demonstration that His risen body was really material. Accordingly, the disciples did thus accept it. For the Fourth Evangelist records with his characteristic simplicity : " Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." What a reaction from the despair of Crucifixion-day and from the superstitious terror of even but a few minutes before ! How charming the *naïveté* with which the Third Evangelist declares : " They still believed not for joy, and wondered " ; or, as we phrase it, " Too good news to be true."

John xx. 20.

Luke xxiv. 41.

The Decisive
Test.

Luke xxiv. 41-43.

Mark xvi. 14.

Luke xxiv. 30.

John xxi. 1-14.

Acts x. 40, 41.

And now the Lord, in order to scatter for ever the possibility of any doubt as to the materiality of His risen body, resorts to a test absolutely decisive. Jesus saith to them, " Have ye here anything to eat ? " And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish ; and He took it and ate before them. Here was an affair incontestably corporeal, necessarily implying physical processes of mastication, deglutition, digestion, and the like. Doubtless it was to this scene of eating, and to the similar scene which has already occurred at Emmaus on this same Resurrection Sunday, and to another similar scene which will occur a few days later on the shore of Gennesaret, that Peter refers when in his interview with the centurion of Cæsarea he declares : " Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him

after He rose from the dead." If ever there was a historic proposition or statement based on the testimony of others demonstrated, that proposition is this: The body of the Risen Lord was a material body. And yet, although Christ's risen body was material, it was also at the same time spiritual. It was a body both natural and supernatural; now suddenly appearing and as suddenly vanishing; now tangible and now gliding through closed doors; now eating and now ascending; now amenable to laws of gravitation and now as weightless as space. That is to say, Christ's risen body was a spiritual body; and yet it was endowed with immanent physical potentialities, being capable of investing itself with physical aspects and qualities. And this is just one of the differences between what St. Paul in his great Argument for the Resurrection calls the natural body and the spiritual body. The natural body *must* eat, because it is of the earth, earthy: the spiritual body *can* eat, because it is of the heaven, heavenly. If the Risen Lord ate, it was not because He yielded to a physiological necessity: it was because, as in the case of the three angelic visitors to Abraham by the Oaks of Mamre, He chose to exercise an immanent potentiality. Beware, oh ye theological speculators and ye materialistic skeptics touching the Resurrection, lest ye too incur the Lord's rebuke of the Sadducees in this very matter of the risen body: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." Christ's risen body is the reconciling mediator between the ancient Sadducean disbelief in res-

1 Cor. xv. 44.

Gen. xliii. 1-8.

Matt. xxii. 29.

urrection and angel and spirit, and the modern spiritualistic belief in an incorporeal, phantasmic, spiritual resurrection. The risen body of Jesus Christ is the basis of the true Anthropology, or doctrine of man as composed of immaterial spirit and material body.

The Celestial Commission.

John xx. 21.

John xvii. 18.

Heb. iii. 1.

1 Tim. ii. 5.

Psalm xl. 7, 8.

Heb. x. 7.

And now, having demonstrated to His disciples that His Epiphany before them was not a mere apparition, but a real body, the Risen Lord says to them again, "Peace be unto you!" And then He solemnly adds, "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." The same sentiment He had already uttered in His own wonderful prayer of the Thursday night before: "As Thou didst send Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." The clauses demand careful, reverent consideration. "As the Father hath sent Me." The Incarnation then was a genuine Apostolate, or Divine sending forth. The Son of God did not saunter into the world as a knight errant in quest of chivalric adventure. He came as the Sent One from God, being in very truth the Apostle as well as High-priest of our profession. And He was sent on an embassy of peace, to offer pardon to a guilty world, being Himself the one Mediator between God and Man. But, although He was the Sent from God, He came freely, lovingly, joyously, saying, "Lo, I come—in the volume of the book it is written of Me—I delight to do Thy will, O My God, and Thy law is within My heart." And as Jesus was the Apostle from the Father, so the Christian ministry is the Apostle from Jesus, sharing His character

and His embassy: "As the Father hath sent Me, so also do I send you." All things are of God, Who reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and gave to us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that in Christ God was reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and He hath committed unto us the word of the reconciliation: we then are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were beseeching you by us: we pray you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.

2 Cor. v. 18-20.

Having thus commissioned the disciples as His missionaries of peace, the Risen Lord breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, the Holy Breath." It was the consummation, so to speak, of the Divine inspiration begun in Eden. The Lord God formed the man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. The inspiration in Eden was the symbolic infusion of the spiritual principle: the affliction in Jerusalem was the symbolic effusion of spiritual power. For what the infant Church, and especially the Apostles, needed above all things else, was to be clothed with power from on high. And swiftly and gloriously was the symbolic affliction of the first Easter Sunday fulfilled.

Gen. ii. 7.

Luke xxiv. 49.

When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them tongues, as of fire, dividing themselves, and it sat upon each of them;

Acts ii. 1-4.

The Celestial
Inspiration.
John xx. 22.

and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit ; and they began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. What though we may not expect for ourselves the same miraculous credentials which escorted the Apostolic Church ? The Baptism of the Spirit, in the truest sense of the phrase, awaits us also if we, like the Apostles, pray for it ; and this for the sufficient and blessed reason that God is our Father, yearning to bless us. God's Fatherhood is our plea for expecting the baptism of the Spirit. Which of you that is a father, if his son shall ask for bread, will give him a stone ? Or if he ask for a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent ? Or if he shall ask for an egg, will he give him a scorpion ? If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit unto them that ask Him !

The Celestial
Declaration.

John xx. 28.

Matt. xvi. 17-19.

And when Jesus had breathed on them, saying, " Receive ye the Holy Breath ! " He added : " Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them : whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." The words recall language which the Lord had already used on the occasion of the memorable confession of Peter at Cæsarea Philippi : " Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonas ! For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father Who is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, i. e., Rock, and upon this Rock I will build My Church ; and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it : and I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven ; and what-

soever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Nor was this binding and loosing power conferred on Peter alone. A few days afterward, as the disciples were gathered together at Capernaum, the Lord gave them directions touching the treatment of offenses, and then added: "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." And so, on the evening of Resurrection Sunday: "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

Matt. xviii. 18.

John xx. 23.

How much do these remarkable words mean? Doubtless all that they seem to mean, namely, this: The Church of Jesus Christ, as being the Prophet of God, interpreting His word and will and character, speaks with Divine authority. Of course this Divine endowment, in the literal, technical, ecclesiastical sense of the words, belonged only to the Apostles. Being the subjects of a special inspiration, they spoke with a special authority—an authority as supreme to-day as when Peter used his power of the keys in closing the Kingdom of Heaven to Simon the magician, and in opening the Kingdom of Heaven to Cornelius the centurion. Nevertheless, in the essential, spiritual sense of the promise, the endowment of the first Easter Sunday belongs to the Christian Church of to-day not less than to the original apostolic band. For there is a Church larger and diviner than even the ecclesiastical organizations

Acts viii. 18-23.

Acts x. 1-48.

1 Tim. iii. 15.

Col. i. 24.

Matt. xvi. 16.

Rev. xxi. 27.

Eph. ii. 6.

Heb. viii. 2.

Rom. viii. 26.

Acts i. 5.

John vi. 27-58.

2 Peter iii. 11.

of the apostolic period. It is the Church of the living God, the spiritual corporation of regenerated characters, the Body of Jesus Christ. And this spiritual Church, surveyed as a whole, in and by itself, has never had any outward, technical organization. It has, indeed, its creed; but it is not the formal deliverance by any ecclesiastical council; it is the personal belief and confession that Jesus the Nazarene is the Christ and Son of the living God. It has its condition of membership; but it is neither subscription to articles of faith, nor baptism, nor vote of those already members; it is faith in the Heavenly Father, as revealed in Jesus Christ His Son, through demonstration of the Holy Ghost. It has its member-roll; but no mortal eye has seen it; it is the Lamb's roll of life. It has its sessions; but they are not held in structures of wood or brick or stone; they are sessions in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. It has its Pastor; but no earthly presbytery has ever ordained Him; it is the Minister of the true Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man. It has its music; but it is not the audible music of solo and chorus; it is the music of the Spirit, Himself making intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered. It has its Baptism; but it is not baptism in any earthly water; it is baptism in the Holy Ghost. It has its Communion; but it is not communion in any earthly bread and wine; it is Communion in the living Bread and the living Wine which came down from heaven. It has its polity; but it is not the polity of constitution and by-laws; it is the polity of holy

conversation and godliness. Take all these things away ; take away creed and member-roll and sanctuary and minister and baptistery and communion-table and rules of church-order ; you have taken away only what is technical and incidental and transient ; the Church of the living God, in all the essentials of her nature, remains behind. And it is to this Church of the living God, this invisible, spiritual corporation, this Body of Christ, that her risen Head says : “ Receive ye the Holy Spirit ; whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” Not that the Church does this by any formal vote or edict, as though she were an outward, organized, sitting conclave. This is the Romish heresy and lie, materializing the conception of Christ’s Church, caging her in the crib of form and circumstance, localizing her here and there, now saying, “ Lo, she is in the desert,” and anon exclaiming, “ Lo, she is in the secret chambers.” No ! the Church of the living God or Spiritual Corporation of Jesus Christ has no outward organization. No man has ever seen her any more than any man has ever seen Public Opinion. Yet there is a spiritual Church of Jesus Christ, just as truly as there is a Public Opinion. Nor does this spiritual Church of Jesus Christ need, any more than Public Opinion, to hold formal sessions and pass resolutions in order to bind and loose, retain and remit. Not by a local gathering and formal vote, but by an invisible, spiritual permeation through all the walks of society ; not by decrees of councils, local or oecumenical, but by

John xx. 22, 23.
Matt. xxiv. 36.

effluence of personal character; not by formal organization, but by *esprit du corps*, as being a spiritual corporation or Christ's Mystical Body, does the Church of the living God bind and loose, condemn and absolve, retain and remit. Her authority is not the earth-born authority she asserts when she thunders from the Vatican, or whispers from Lambeth; her authority is the Heaven-born authority she wields when, without scepter or sword or purse, she inspires a nation's heart and conscience and life with the spirit she has caught from her Crucified and Risen Lord. The bans she pronounces are not such outward bans as the Man of Sin has so often loved to pronounce when he has laid hamlet and city and province and empire under interdict; her bans are those inward bans which the spirit of society feels to be Divine. The absolution she pronounces is no mere verbal absolution, such as can be bought at the confessional with penance or money; it is the inner absolution which none but He can pronounce Who alone has the authority to forgive sins. And observe precisely the authority by which the Church of the living God remits and retains. It is not by her own authority; it is by the authority of the Truth of which she has been Divinely appointed to be the receptacle and custodian and buttress and disburser. Her office in this respect is not magisterial; it is simply declarative. She does not make the Truth; she only believes it and speaks it and acts it. And the Truth it is which binds and looses, retains and remits. That is to say: all that the Church does in this respect is this: she

Mark ii. 7.

1 Tim. iii. 16.

simply declares the conditions of remission and retention. She is neither lawgiver nor judge: she is only a voice in the wilderness, merely echoing her Lord's judgments. What the Church does in this matter of remission and retention is much what the minister does when he performs the marriage rite; it is not the minister who joins together the couple; he only speaks in God's name, declaring that God has joined them together; he does not marry them; he simply pronounces them married. In like manner, the function of the Church in respect to binding and loosing, retaining and remitting, is simply declarative. It is not the Church, but the Truth, of which the Church, by her speech and life, is the custodian and disburser, which binds and looses, retains and remits. And in as far as she speaks and acts the Truth, and nothing but the Truth, in so far what she remits on earth is remitted in heaven, and what she retains on earth is retained in heaven. In as far as she is really Christ's Body, sharing His vocation and spirit, in so far does she share Christ's authority. Jesus said unto them, "Peace be unto you! As the Father hath sent Me, even so I send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said: "Receive ye the Holy Breath; whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." That is to say, Heaven ratifies what the true Spiritual Church in her instincts, as cleared and approved by the Holy Ghost, remits and retains; and this for the sufficient reason that

Isaiah xl. 8.

John xx. 21-23.

1 Cor. vi. 19.

she is Christ's own Body, and as such the Temple of the Holy Ghost.

The Profound Recapitulation.

Luke xxiv. 44.

Matt. xi. 11.

But the Risen Lord proceeds: "These are My words which I spoke unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." Observe, first, the Lord's endorsement of the Old Testament Canon as arranged by the Jews: first, "the Law of Moses"; second, "the Prophets"; and third, "the Psalms." These were the only Scriptures which the Jewish Church possessed; and yet, although they were so meager as compared with ours, their influence was sacred enough to develop such saintly characters as Zachariah and Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary, Simon and Anna, John the Forerunner and Jesus the Fulfiller. How much greater our privilege in that we have in addition Gospels and Acts, Epistles and Apocalypse! What though John the Baptist was the greatest that had been born of woman? The littlest one born under the Christian Dispensation is, in the matter of privilege, greater than John the Baptist. Again, observe that the Risen Lord asserts that He Himself is the theme and goal of Law and Prophecy and Psalm: "All things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." Jesus the Christ is the focus of all Time, the converging point of all Prophecy, the radiating point of all Fulfillment. Once more, observe that in thus claiming to be the goal of Prophecy, He asserts no new claim, but simply reminds them of past assertions: "These

are the words which I spake unto you while I was still with you."

"Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." A few hours before, on His way to Emmaus, He had opened the Scriptures to His disciples; now He opens His disciples to the Scriptures. And well He may, for this double opening is necessary and indeed indispensable: first, the outward opening, or the illumination of the truth; and second, the inward opening, or the illumination of the heart. For, in order to see a landscape, two things are necessary: first, the landscape itself; and second, an eye to see it. The landscape is the truth and the eye is the heart. And the inward opening is the key to the outward opening. Open Thou, then, our eyes, O Lord of Light, that we may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law. Yea, Spirit Most Holy—

The Gracious
Opening.
Luke xxiv. 45.
Luke xxiv. 32.

Psalm cxix. 18.

Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse.

Paradise Lost.

Having thus the Anointing from the Holy One,
we shall indeed know all things.

1 John ii. 20.

"Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer, and should rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name unto all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem: and ye are witnesses of these things." "Thus it is written": the expression of course refers to the Old Testament. Nearly a hundred times does it recur in the New

The Holy Ne-
cessity.
Luke xxiv. 46-48.

Rev. xix. 10.

Luke xxiv. 25-27.

1 Cor. xv. 1-4.

Testament, to say nothing of the numerous references elsewhere to the "Scriptures." Verily the Old Testament is a witness to Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God. The Spirit of Prophecy is the Testimony of Jesus. "That the Christ should suffer, and rise from the dead the third day." It recalls the saying of the Walk to Emmaus: "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" And, beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. How powerfully St. Paul felt that the Death and Resurrection of the Messiah had been foretold in the Old Testament, and that these two facts constitute the Gospel, is evident from his strong language in his Letter to the Corinthians: "Brethren, I declare anew unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are being saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye believed in vain: for I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Jesus Christ did not die and rise again in order to fulfill the Old Testament; but His Death and Resurrection had been foretold in the Old Testament, because God could have no other way of saving sinners than by the Death and Resurrection of a Divine Mediator. The necessity was prophetic

because it had been moral. "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name unto all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem." "Repentance," i. e., change of moral purpose, amendment of habit, revolution of life: "And remission of sins," i. e., release from the penalties of the law, discharge from the condemnation of conscience, absolution from the Judge of Souls. "Should be preached," i. e., announced as the Divine Salvation, proclaimed as God's way of saving, published as the Gospel, or God's good News. "In His Name," i. e., in the sphere of Christ's Person, in and through virtue of and means of Christ's nature, and character, and death, and resurrection, and work. It is just because Jesus Christ was what He was and did what He did that repentance and remission of sins are possible. "Unto all the nations." Not only to the Jews, but also to the Gentiles; not only in Palestine, but also in Asia Minor, and Italy, and Germany, and Russia, and Turkey, and Great Britain, and America, and China, and Africa, and the isles of the seas. "Beginning from Jerusalem." Ay, begin from the city of the Abrahamic, covenanted people, for salvation is of the Jews; the city of the Temple and the daily Sacrificial Lamb; the city of His own defeat on Cross and in Tomb; the city of His own Resurrection and Epiphanies, whereby He proved Himself to be the promised Christ of God and Lord of Eternity. "And ye are witnesses of these things," i. e., the life, and character, and sufferings, and death, and burial, and resurrection of the Son of God. God grant that

John iv. 22

Phil. iii. 10, 11.

we also may know the fellowship of His sufferings and the conformity to the likeness of His death, that so we may know the power of His resurrection and attain unto it.

The Matchless Promise.

Luke xxiv. 49.

Acts i. 4, 5.

Joel ii. 28, 29.

Acts ii. 38.

And now we come to a matchless Promise : “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you ; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye are endued with power from on high ; for John baptized with water : but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence.” “Behold, I send forth the Promise of My Father upon you.” That Promise of the Father was the Father’s Promise of the Spirit. And that Promise was already eight hundred years old. Jehovah, speaking by the mouth of His prophet Joel, had declared : “It shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh ; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions, and even upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit.” And in pouring out the Spirit the Risen Lord declares that He will act conjointly with His Father : “Lo, I send forth the Promise of My Father upon you.” Accordingly, on the day the Pentecostal Spirit was poured out Peter emphatically announced : “Being, therefore, exalted by the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the Promise of the Holy Spirit, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.” “But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem.” Waiting is still often a large part of life’s discipline. It is true, e. g., in respect to our under-

standing of those prophetic Scriptures which yet remain unfulfilled : waiting is our duty here rather than prophesying. Again : waiting is true in respect to theology, or our knowledge of the doctrinal Scriptures. There is no such exposition of Scripture as the Providence of God, no such teacher of theology as the tuition of passing events. Once more : waiting is true in respect to capacity for duty, or access of spiritual power. There are times when the Providence of God brings us into direst straits : mountains on the right, mountains on the left, Egyptians behind, Red Sea before : and then the voice of the Lord God comes down to us saying : “ Fear not : stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which He will show to you this day.” In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength. Yea, there are times when

Exodus xiv. 13.

Isaiah xxx. 15.

They also serve who only stand and wait.

“ Until ye are clothed with power from on high.” For spiritual investiture is the soul’s true garment : spiritual-mindedness is the only real sovereignty. Not by might, not by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. And it is as true to-day as it was in the days of Zerubbabel or of the Apostolic Church. Vain are our prayers and studies and ordinances and enterprises and sacrifices unless the Holy Ghost is with us. Let us, each of us, then tarry in his Jerusalem until he is clothed with power from on high. “ For John indeed baptized with water.” But, although that baptism was a genuine baptism, it was only a symbol ; it conveyed no real grace : like the divers

Zechariah iv. 6.

Heb. ix. 9, 10.

washings of the Mosaic ritual, it could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience. "But ye will be baptized in the Holy Spirit." So the Forerunner himself had prophesied : "I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance ; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear : He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire." Not that water baptism is no longer needed ; the

Matt. iii. 11.

Matt. xxviii. 19.

Acts ii.

Risen Lord ere ascending will bid His Apostles go into all the world, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. But useless is water-baptism, even though it be in the Jordan itself, unless it is preceded by Spirit-baptism. It is only as the Risen Lord Himself baptizes us in the Holy Ghost that we can be endued with power from on high. "Not many days hence." How swiftly was the Promise fulfilled ! Ten days after the Ascension, Pentecost being fully come, the Risen Lord, exalted to His regal seat at the Father's right hand, opened the windows of heaven, and, pouring out the promised flood of the Spirit, baptized His infant Church in the gracious inundation. May the same Risen Lord, enthroned in the same regal session, baptize us all in the same Pentecostal baptism not many days hence !

THE
EPIPHANY TO THOMAS.

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

JOHN xx. 29.



VII.

THE EPIPHANY TO THOMAS.

ALAS ! one of the Apostles was absent at this blessed Sunday evening interview : it was Thomas, called Didymus, i. e., the Twin. I know not the reason of his absence. Perhaps it was because of his somber disposition ; for melancholy instinctively craves isolation. What I know is this : in being absent from his brethren on the evening of the first Resurrection Sunday he missed unspeakable privileges : he missed the sight and salutation of his Risen Lord—“ Peace be unto you ”! He missed the Heavenly Commission—“ As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you : ” he missed the Celestial Endowment—“ Receive ye the Holy Breath : whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them : whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained ”: he missed the Gracious Exposition—“ Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures ”: he missed the Matchless Promise—“ Behold, I send forth the Promise of My Father upon you.” As it was then, so it has been since : the prayer-room is the favorite scene of the Risen

The Skeptic's
Absence.
John xx. 24.

John xx. 19, 20.

John xx. 21.

John xx. 21, 22.

Luke xxiv. 45.

Luke xxiv. 49.

Matt. xviii. 20.

Lord's advents. It is precisely here that He loves to make His epiphanies : "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." But, although Thomas was absent from this gathering of the brethren, do not blame him too severely. It was still early in the career of the Nazarene's Church, and Sunday as the Christian Sabbath was not yet established. By and by Thomas will be among the most stalwart champions of the Church of the Resurrection. Meantime, having heard from the brethren that they had seen the Lord, he stoutly declares : "Except I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger in the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

John xx. 25.

Character of Thomas.

And here let us loiter for a few moments to survey the character of this Apostle. In Thorwaldsen's famous group of Christ and His Apostles at Copenhagen, St. Thomas is represented as a grave, thoughtful personage, standing in a skeptical attitude, holding in his hand a rule, as though he would measure every argument and evidence before yielding his assent. The artist's conception is doubtless just. Thomas seems to have been a man who was naturally disposed to be cautious, scrutinizing, perceiving all the difficulties of a case, slow to believe : in a single word, skeptical. Probably there is no better way of obtaining a clear view of his character than by glancing at two incidents which the Evangelists record concerning him.

Thomas in the Perea : John x. 31-40.

The first occurred in the region beyond the Jordan. The conspiracy of Priests and Pharisees

and Levites against the Nazarene was swiftly ripening. On the occasion of His last visit to Jerusalem He had barely escaped death at the hands of this ruffian hierarchy. To revisit it at this time seemed the height of madness. But a message comes to Him from a beloved family whose home is in a little village lying in the outskirts of the guilty city. And the message comes in words which the sender knew would move His great heart: "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." Nor does the troubled sister appeal to the Lord of Love in vain. He summons His disciples, and says: "Let us go into Judea again." They expostulate with Him, setting before Him the perils of such an undertaking: "Master, the Jews were of late seeking to stone Thee; and goest Thou thither again?" He declares in a lofty enigma that no harm can befall a righteous man in the discharge of his duty till his hour comes: "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If a man walk in the day he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world; but if a man walk in the night he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." That is to say: To every human being God grants time enough to discharge his duty; and this time, be it longer or shorter, makes his twelve hours; and during these twelve hours he will be safe, however deadly the perils which environ him. The Lord continues: "Our friend Lazarus hath fallen asleep; but I go that I may awake him." Thomas, perceiving the steadfast resolve of his Master, and apprehending the worst, yet true to Him in spite of every peril, ex-

claims: "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." This little incident reveals two traits of character which are often blended in the same person—despondency and devotion. Look, first, at His Despondency, the despondency. There was much in what the Lord had been saying which was truly assuring. He had spoken confidently of the security of those who were in the discharge of duty. The Heavenly Father would not permit death to overtake them before their mission was accomplished. Although He was about to go within reach of His enemies, yet He would be safe so long as His appointed twelve hours lasted. Moreover, He had hinted to them that He would achieve a great wonder in Bethany. His proposed visit to Jerusalem would not only be safe; it would add another laurel to His fame, another credential of His Messiahship. To a more cheerful, less foreboding spirit than that of our Thomas, these assurances would have been sufficient. Such a one would have said: "It is enough. My Lord never spoke untruly; He has never been deceived; He never miscalculated; my Lord can do all things; all His promises have proved true; I will still trust Him; let us go, and we shall be safe with Him." But this was not the character of Thomas. It was not in him to look on the bright side of things. His home was in the deep glen, darkened by overshadowing mountains; not on the hill-top, bright with the sunbeams of the live-long day. Vain was it that his Lord had been speaking words of holy confidence and cheer; all was forgotten in the possibility of disaster. And yet this dark tem-

perament was relieved by a sunny element. Notice then, secondly, his devotion : " Let us also go, that we may die with Him." Despondency did not lead Thomas into treachery. He did not say to himself : " Now is the time for me to be prudent, and take care of myself ; I have served my Master faithfully so long as I could be of any use to Him ; but now that all is over, and He is determined to rush into the jaws of death, it is not my duty to throw away my own life also." Nothing of this kind falls from the lips of our true-hearted hero. He was not one of those selfish inconstants of whom the poet sings :

And His Devotion.

The friends who in our sunshine live
When winter comes are flown.

Within that nature so oppressed with gloom and apprehension gleamed the fire of a heroic devotion, and he exclaims : " My Lord shall not go alone ; He has always been true to me, and I will be as true to Him ; what though disaster and death await Him ? Let us also go and share His fate, be it derision, persecution, grave. Let us also go, that we may die with Him." Friends, prone to doubt and despondency, here is cheer for you. I do not mean such as take no pains to guard against dejection and foreboding. For there are two sorts of melancholy. One is of a perverse, intentional kind. There are some persons who seem to have a real passion for being melancholy, entering into the state of dolefulness with a sort of lugubrious glee, issuing daily bulletins concerning their dejection, the refrain of whose tireless threnody

sounds very much like this: "See how melancholy I am—what a martyr to depression of spirits!" I am not aware that the case of Thomas affords to these persistent wailers any special reason for cheer. But there is another kind of melancholy which comes without the courting, which the most resolute will can not wholly lay. There are some persons in whose constitution melancholy is inwrought as an inalienable part of the soul's inheritance. Much as they toil to fly from it, the ebon bird gives unwearied chase, and its ominous wings hover close on their footsteps. Few things look bright to them. Their hearts forebode ill concerning their country, their church, their business, their family, themselves. They fear that the times are waxing ill, that the Church is retrograding. They feel that they have never done any good in the world. They have doubts about their own personal acceptance. They feel sure that they can not meet the duties and temptations and trials of to-morrow. They are certain that great calamities await them, and certain that they will prove utterly inadequate to the crisis. And just because they see so many portents of a coming storm, and feel themselves so unequal to it, they wander about in gloom and wretchedness, mournfully imagining that they have no right to the Christian's inheritance. And yet these very persons are among the most stalwart of the Christian community. Prone, like Thomas, to look on the dark side, disturbed with misgivings, tortured with forebodings, I tell them that down in the depths of their souls they, like Thomas, are true to their

Lord and Saviour. Let the night of calamity and trial really come ; let the fires which test men's souls be really lighted ; let the reign of the scourge and the rack and the fagot be really inaugurated, and our streets flow with martyrs' blood : it shall be seen that while the confident and hilarious may blench and falter and abjure, these despondent Thomases will march with dauntless step to the dungeon, the stake, and the gibbet.

Again : look at the skepticism of Thomas in His Incredulity. the matter of his Lord's resurrection. There can not be a stronger contrast here than that between the unbelief of Thomas and the belief of his fellow-apostle John. It was enough for the disciple whom Jesus loved that he had seen in the morning twilight of Resurrection Sunday an empty sepulchre and carefully arranged drapery ; these he observed, and straightway believed that his Lord had risen. Vain was it for Thomas that he had heard that the Risen Lord had appeared to Mary Magdalene, charging her with messages for John xx. 14-18. the Apostles of whom he was one ; or to the other Matt. xxviii. 8, 9. women in the vicinity of the sepulchre ; or to Simon Peter ; or to Cleopas and his comrade, setting on fire their hearts with expositions of the Luke xxiv. 18-35. Messianic Prophecies ; or to the Ten Apostles and others, exhibiting to them His pierced hands and feet and side, and eating before them. All this Luke xxiv. 36-42. Thomas had heard, and still he refused to believe. John's confiding, receptive nature had led him to believe on testimony of a merely negative character—the empty tomb and the carefully arranged burial cloths ; Thomas refused to believe on the

personal, direct, cumulative testimony of perhaps a score of persons, with most of whom he had lived for years on terms of closest intimacy. Ah, I fear that, notwithstanding his brave loyalty, there was something of pride and perversity here as well as natural or constitutional incredulity. I fancy I interpret him aright when I represent him as saying in his heart: "My brethren may believe if they can; I at least will not be duped so easily; they may believe if they choose on the testimony of sight and touch; I will believe only on the testimony of actually putting my own finger into the place of the nails and putting my own hand into His side." Poor Thomas!

Three Kinds
of Skepti-
cism:

Skepticism of
Will,

And of Rea-
son,

And yet let us be just even with this unhappy skeptic. For there are three kinds of skepticism. And, first, there is the skepticism of will. This is a dishonest, captious, caviling, malignant skepticism, taking delight in unbelieving for unbeliever's own sake. Such was the skepticism of Pharaoh, Caiaphas, Julian, Voltaire, Paine. Such is the skepticism of many of the modern free thinkers, so-called. So too many young men, especially in institutions of learning, fancy it a very brave and bright and philosophic thing to question and demur and deny whatever they may happen to hear, fully resolved that so long as they can detect in one scale a single grain of dust it shall outweigh whatever pounds of gold there may be in the other. For such complacent, deliberate, willful skepticism as this there is nothing for a wise man to do but to feel a measureless contempt. Again: there is the skepticism of in-

quiry; a candid, honest, earnest questioning of statements in order to ascertain their accuracy, and with the full purpose of yielding assent should they endure the test. In fact, the original meaning of the word—"skeptical"—is carefully surveying, investigating, inquiring. Would God it had never had any other meaning! For this kind of skepticism has been an invaluable factor in the unfolding of truth, questioning and so exploding not a few interpretations and deliverances which had no basis but assumption, tradition, or ignorance. Little danger is there of subjecting the truths of the Gospel to tests too severe. Truth never appears so glorious, never deports herself so divinely, as when she springs triumphant from the crucible. Precisely because she is Truth and not Lie, she demands to be tested. Skepticism then, in its primary sense as meaning honest inquiry, is wholesome: for it is one of the conditions of advance. Philosophy, says Aristotle, is the art of doubting well. Such was the skepticism of Nicodemus, who stealthily indeed but after all honestly came to the Nazarene teacher as an inquirer: such the skepticism of the Bereans, who were nobler than the Thessalonians in that they searched the Old Testament to see whether the things which the missionaries Paul and Silas had been telling them were true or not: such the skepticism which Paul himself requires when he says: "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good, throw away that which is bad." Once more: there is the skepticism of temperament or inborn tendency. Through some peculiarity in the men-

John iii. 1, 2.

Acts xvii. 11.

1 Thes. v. 21, 22.

And of Tem-
perament.

tal constitution, or through some untoward circumstances of training, certain persons are peculiarly exposed in spite of themselves to morbid unbelief, or a persistent tendency to look on the dubious side of things. It is not that they will not believe: rather is it that they can not. How many such persons there are, tortured all their days with this evil spirit of unbelief, trying with all their heart to believe, yet racked with doubts and uncertainties! Nevertheless this painful unbelief is often, as we have seen, consistent with heroic loyalty. The very apostle who was the last to believe that his Lord had risen was also the very apostle who when his Lord was in peril was the first to exclaim: "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

In Memoriam,
xcv.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,
Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue eyes
Are tender over drowning flies,
You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew
In many a subtle question versed,
Who touched a jarring lyre at first,
But ever strove to make it true:

Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out.
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gathered strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the specters of the mind
And laid them: thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own :
And Power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the night alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,
As over Sinai's peaks of old,
While Israel made their gods of gold,
Although the trumpet blew so loud.

These, then, are the three kinds of skepticism : the skepticism of the heart, which stubbornly says—“I will not”; the skepticism of the head, which inquiringly says—“I may not”; and the skepticism of the temperament, which mournfully says—“I can not.” Our Thomas seems to have blended in himself the last two kinds : he was inquiringly, constitutionally skeptical. In brief, he was Thomas the Doubter. And now let us see how his incredulity in the matter of his Lord’s resurrection was dispelled.

It is the evening of the second Resurrection Sunday. Again the infant church are gathered together. Although Thomas was absent a week ago, thank God, he is present now. It may be after all that he has a latent feeling that the report he has heard during the week from his comrades is true, and that his dear Lord has indeed risen. But he will not confess it : melancholy men are always apt to put their worst side foremost. In all events, the true saint can not long absent himself from Christian company : that is his center of gravity. And again through the doors closed for fear of the Jews Jesus Himself glides, and takes His position in the center, and as is His wont says

The Sudden
Epiphany.
John xx. 26, 27.

to the little company: "Peace be unto you!" Lovingly His eye rests on one, and then on another, and then on another. And now it falls on a poor trembling doubter, even him who during the week has been saying: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails and put my finger into the print of the nails and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." But He Who had read Nathanael's thoughts when sitting under the fig-tree, and knows of Himself what is in man, says to this poor doubter: "Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands: and reach hither thy hand, and put it in My side: and be not faithless, but believing." Ah, what has happened to Thomas now? Why does he not obey his Master? Why, instead of scrutinizing these nailed hands, instead of thrusting his finger into this pierced side, instead of examining these holy scars—themselves now glorified into the very credentials of Messiahship and trophies of victory—why, instead of doing as the Master invites him, does he burst forth into the adoring exclamation, "My Lord and my God!"? Ah, what reason, what the testimony of comrades could not do, unspeakable condescension has done. The infinite Love that could so bow itself to human weakness and unbelief has at last conquered even Thomas the Doubter. And so from the lips of this skeptic falls the fullest and most adoring confession of Christ's Godhead that is recorded in the Evangelists: My Lord and my God! It was, as ever since, the spontaneous *credo* of the Christian Heart. The finger needs not touch the man when the heart has already felt the God.

John i. 48.

John ii. 25.

And thus we come to the precious Beatitude : Jesus saith to him : “ Thomas, because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed ; blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.”

The Beatitude
of Faith.
John xx. 29.

There are two kinds of proof that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead.

Twofold Proof
of Christ's
Resurrec-
tion :
Outward,

The first is outward or bodily : “ Because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed.” This is the very kind of proof which Thomas himself had demanded when he said : “ Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails and put my finger in the place of the nails and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.” And here also let us be just with Thomas. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ, if it ever occurred, was a physical fact, and as such to be demonstrated by physical proofs. The Risen Lord Himself, as we have seen, acknowledged the propriety of such a test. When on the first Easter evening He glided through the closed doors, the disciples were terrified and affrighted, and fancied they saw a specter. To soothe and convince them He said : “ Why are ye troubled and why do doubts arise in your hearts ? Look at My hands and My feet and My side, that it is I Myself : handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see Me have.” And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet and His side, ay, the very hands and feet which had been nailed, the very side which had been pierced, which, although He was now glorified, still bore the marks of the accursed, vanquished hate. And while they still doubted for very joy and wondered, He added : “ Have ye here any

Luke xxiv. 36-43.

food?" And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and He took and ate it before them. Thomas, then, was quite right in demanding that Christ's alleged resurrection should be subjected to material, physical tests. In demanding this he was, to use a favorite modern word, strictly "scientific." And, be it observed, the Risen Lord fully, squarely met the scientific demand: "Thomas, put thy finger into the print of the nails, thrust thy hand into My wounded side, and be not faithless but believing." So far, then, as skepticism of the head goes, I am glad that Thomas was a skeptic, and demanded a test so rigorously scientific. For, if Thomas the skeptic doubted and denied so long, and at last yielded belief only because physical proofs wrung the belief from him, who of us can reasonably doubt that Jesus has risen? "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ," says the saintly Augustine, "was doubted by Thomas in order that it might not be doubted by us."* The doubt of Thomas is the strength of the Church.

And Inward.

The other kind of proof that Jesus Christ has risen is inward and spiritual: "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed." For there is a spiritual world as truly as there is a material, a spiritual sense as truly as a bodily. Think not that because that spiritual world lies beyond the range of your physical tests—your telescopes and microscopes, your reagents and balances—it does not therefore exist. Truths there are too subtle to be detected by the heat of any crucible, too vast to be caught within the angles of any geom-

* *Ab eo dubitatum est, ne a nobis dubitaretur.*

etry. And the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is in an intense, unique sense one of these truths. After all, the real question in the matter of His resurrection is not, Did Christ's body rise ? That is but a subordinate, incidental issue. And for that, thy test, O Thomas ! was quite sufficient. But what I want to know is something unspeakably more important than whether Christ's body has risen. What I want to know is whether Jesus Christ Himself has risen and is alive to-day. I want to know whether the Divine Nazarene Who was wont to go about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the Devil, is still a personal Presence and gracious Power, still capable of wonder-working, up-building, translating, celestializing ; I want to know whether He can still love me, forgive me, save me. And for this thy test, O Thomas ! is miserably insufficient. I must have a test finer and more celestial, even the test of a spirit-touch. And to this test of a spirit-touch the Risen Lord responds, oh, how gloriously ! The grand proof of His resurrection is not that eighteen hundred years ago He showed himself alive after His Passion by many infallible proofs, ever and anon making His Epiphanies during forty days to His infant Church ; the grand proof of His resurrection is that to-day He is felt by His Church in her own experience to be a personal, subduing, transfiguring Power. That is to say, the real argument for the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the argument from a personal Christian experience. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. And this spiritual vision

Acts x. 38.

Acts i. 8.

1 John v. 10.

of the Risen Lord is a truer vision of Him than the bodily vision of Him by any earthly Thomas. In fact, the only way in which we can ever see the Risen Lord truly is in the Epiphanies of Faith. Ah, what a reversal there is here in this spirit-realm of man's rule for believing or theory of faith! Man says, "Seeing is believing"; Jesus says, "Believing is seeing." Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. And yet it is better to believe as poor Thomas did on the testimony of sense, than not to believe at all. But better, gloriously better, it is to believe with the Spirit than with the finger. "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed; blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed." O glorious Master, we thank Thee for this Thy doubting apostle. Had it not been for him we might never have received from Thee this precious Beatitude.

Come and See.

Nevertheless, it ought to be added that this inward vision of the Spiritual Christ is no proof of His resurrection, except to him who has personally experienced it. None but he who is in sympathy with the character of Jesus Christ can see Him as risen. To know the power of His resurrection we must know the fellowship of His sufferings. Let me then echo an ancient invitation. As Philip said to Nathanael, so let it be said to you: "Come and see Jesus Himself." Observe, I do not ask you to believe that He has risen on the testimony of others, not even on the demonstrations of logic. I invite you to an ordeal fiercer and more decisive, even the ordeal of a personal

Phil. iii. 10.

John i. 46.

trial and experience. Come and see the Risen Lord for yourself. Listen to His voice. Observe His character. Keep in His company. Ay, put thy finger, if thou wilt, into the print of the nails, thrust thy hand into His side. I have no fear of the result. Thou, too, wilt adoringly exclaim : " My Lord and my God ! " So shalt thou understand and receive for thyself the Risen Lord's glorious Beatitude. So shalt thou go forth a blessed witness of Easter, even the Easter of the Soul. Heaven grant us all the Apostle's blessed assurance : Whom, not having seen, we love ; in Whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory ; receiving the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls.

Almighty and ever-living God, Who, for the greater confirmation of the faith, didst suffer Thy holy Apostle Thomas to be doubtful in Thy Son's Resurrection, grant us so perfectly, and without all doubt, to believe in Thy Son Jesus Christ, that our faith in Thy sight may never be reproved. Hear us, O Lord, through the same Jesus Christ, to Whom, with Thee, and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

1 Peter i. 8, 9.

Collect for St.
Thomas's
Day.



THE
**EPIPHANY OF THE GALILEAN
MOUNTAIN.**

All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to do all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

MATTHEW xxviii. 18-20.



VIII.

THE EPIPHANY OF THE GALILEAN MOUNTAIN.

THE last night the Man of Sorrows was on earth, while He was on the way from the Pass-over-chamber to Gethsemane, He said to His disciples: “All ye will be offended in Me this night: for it is written, ‘I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad’; but after I have risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.” That same Friday night, the Shepherd was indeed smitten, and the sheep of the flock were indeed scattered. Nevertheless Easter Sunday came; but the infant Church knew not that it was Easter. And so the devoted ministering women came in the early dawn to the sepulchre, to complete the sacred rites of embalming. But, instead of finding the precious corpse, they saw a vision of angels, who said: “Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus the Nazarene, Who was crucified: He is not here: He has risen: hasten, and tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you.” Departing quickly from the tomb, with fear and great joy, the Risen Lord Himself met

The Mountain
Rendezvous.
Matt. xxvi. 80-
89.

Zeich. xlii. 17.

Mark xvi. 1-7.

Matt. xxviii. 8-
10.

them, saying, "All hail!" And while they were still holding Him by the feet, and worshiping Him, He said to them : "Go, tell My brethren that they depart into Galilee, and there shall they see Me." Why He selected Galilee as the place of a special rendezvous, we have not been told. When, however, we remember that it was in Nazareth of Galilee that He had been brought up, and spent most of His thirty years : that Galilee had been the chief scene of His public ministry : and that most of His followers were Galileans : we need not be surprised that, although He was risen from the dead, Galilee was still dear to Him. What the precise spot in Galilee was which He had appointed, whether the Mountain of the Beatitudes, or the Mountain of the Transfiguration, or some other mountain, we have not been informed. All we know is that after Passover week was over, the eleven Apostles went into Galilee, unto the mountain which Jesus had appointed them. Moreover, there is reason for believing that this was also the occasion to which the Apostle Paul alludes, when, in his magnificent argument for the Resurrection, he declares that the Risen Lord had appeared to above five hundred brethren at once: the greater part of whom, he adds, were still alive when he wrote, and therefore could challenge his assertion if it were not true. Nor is it difficult to picture the scene of the grand assembling. The slopes of the nameless Galilean mountain are alive with ascending and joyous pilgrims. There are the eleven Apostles : Peter and Andrew, James and John, Philip and Bartholo-

Matt. xxviii. 16.

1 Cor. xv. 6.

mew, Thomas and Matthew, James the son of Alpheus and Simon the Zealot, Judas the brother of James : alas ! no twelfth Apostle, for the other Judas had been guide to those who took Jesus, and had gone to his own place. There, too, it may be, are the seventy Evangelists : there also Mary of Nazareth, and Mary of Magdala, and Mary of Bethany, and Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary the mother of John Mark, and Martha, and Salome, and Joanna, and Susannah, and the woman of Jacob's Well, and Peter's wife's mother, and the impotent man of Bethesda, and the centurion of Capernaum, and the widow of Nain, and the penitent woman of Simon's feast, and the woman healed on the way, and Jairus and his daughter, and Bartimeus, and the Syrophenician woman, and the deaf mute of Decapolis, and the grateful leper of Samaria, and the woman bound with the spirit of infirmity, and Zaccheus, and Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead, and the blind, and deaf, and mute, and halt, and palsied, and lunatic, whom He had healed, and Joseph and Nicodemus who had borne Him to His tomb : there, too, I doubt not, clambering up the sacred height, are little children : for He loved to take them up in His arms, and caress them, and say : "Of such is the Kingdom of God." Was there ever such a sacred and blessed rendezvous as that ?

And now, having gained the summit, the Risen Lord again makes manifestation of Himself. Did He approach gradually ? Or did He make sudden Epiphany, as when He had twice glided through the bolted doors at Jerusalem ? We are not

Acts 1. 18-26.

Mark x. 18-16.

The Glorious Epiphany.

Matt. xxviii. 17.
John xx. 19, 26.

told. We only know that when they saw Him they worshiped Him. I suppose it was an instantaneous and universal genuflection, like the impressive scene which some of us have witnessed in St. Peter's Cathedral, when on some great solemnity the vast assemblage suddenly knelt in adoration before the Elevation of the Host. In all events, it was a picture of that coming Genuflection when in the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Nevertheless, the sacred Chronicler adds, with charming *naïveté*, that although they knelt down before Him, yet some doubted.

Phil. ii. 10, 11.

Remember that most of these five hundred had not seen Him since He had risen ; they had not been allowed the privilege of the Eleven, to examine the nailed hands and feet, and to handle the sacred body. No wonder, then, that when they caught the first glimpse of their Risen Lord, and adoringly bowed before Him, some of them doubted for very joy. The Evangelist's formal record of this doubt is a charming token of his veracity. As we said of Thomas, so we say of these : they doubted that we might not doubt.

The August
Pronuncia-
miento.

Matt. xxviii. 18-
20.
Mark xvi. 15-18.

And now follows a Majestic Declaration. Jesus came unto them saying : " All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore into all the world, preach the Gospel to every creature, teach all the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things

whatsoever I have commanded you. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In My Name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." A pronunciamiento so august, uttered on an occasion so sublime, demands our minutest, most reverential study.

And, first: the Majestic Assertion: "All power (or, more correctly, all authority) was given to Me in heaven and on earth." Observe: not merely this or that kind of authority, but authority of every kind, whether based on physical strength or intellectual force or moral power: "All authority": and this not merely here and there, but everywhere, on earth not less than in heaven, in heaven not less than on earth. What a contrast this risen, triumphant, diademed Lord to the helpless Babe Who had been cradled in a manger because there was no room for Him in the inn, to the helpless Corpse which had been borne into Joseph's tomb! And this absolute authority had been bestowed on Him: "All authority was *given* Me in heaven and on earth." As the Pre-incarnate Son of God, Who in the beginning was and was with God and was God, all authority was inherently and eternally His. But as the Son of God incarnate—God's Word made flesh and dwelling among men for a mediatorial purpose—a new and unique authority

The Majestic Assertion.
Matt. xxviii. 18.

Luke ii. 7.

John i. 1.

John i. 14.

had been conferred upon Him, and this as the reward of His mediatorial incarnation. That new and unique authority was the guerdon of the victory He had won when in Joseph's tomb He vanquished Death and Hades. Because He had emptied Himself of His glory which He had with the Father before the world was, and had taken on Himself the form of a servant, and been made in the likeness of men, and humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, *therefore* God also highly exalted Him, and raised Him from the dead, and crowned Him with glory and honor, and seated Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come, and put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to His Church, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him. Yea, He was with power declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead. That was the hour when the Ancient of Days said unto Him: "Thou art My Son: this day have I begotten Thee." That was the moment when all authority was given unto Him in heaven and on earth.

The Majestic Commission.

Matt. xxviii. 19,
20.
Mark xvi. 15.

Secondly: the Majestic Commission: "Go ye therefore into all the world, preach the Gospel to every creature, teach all the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you."

Phil. ii. 6-11.

Heb. ii. 9.

Eph. i. 20, 22.

1 Peter iii. 22.

Rom. i. 4.

Psalm ii. 7.

“Go *teach* (or, more correctly, *disciple*), convert to Me, evangelize, Christianize all the nations.” And how are the nations to be discipled to Jesus Christ? By edict and scimetar? No. But by preaching the Gospel to every creature, announcing the Glad Tidings of sin forgiven and death abolished and life everlasting through a Divine Mediator slain and risen, thus realizing the vision of the Evangelic Prophet: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, ‘Thy God reigneth’!” And this Evangel of Grace is to be proclaimed everywhere: “Go ye into *all* the world, disciple unto Me every nation, proclaim My Glad Tidings to every creature under the whole heaven.” How startlingly these words must have fallen on the ears of those Jewish disciples! Hitherto they had been taught to believe that Israel was the only chosen people of God, and that no foreigner could secure His favor except by being circumcised, and so grafted into the Abrahamic stock. Even the Lord Himself in exercising His own ministry had confined Himself to the land of His birth. When He commissioned His twelve Apostles, He commanded them, saying: “Go not aside into any way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” And when He Himself was in the border land between Galilee and Phœnicia, and the Canaanitish woman came and begged Him to have mercy on her daughter,

Isaiah iii. 7.

Matt. x. 5, 6.

Matt. xv. 21-26.

He answered: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel: it is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs." And now, after two thousand years of an exclusively Jewish religion, the Risen Jesus bids His countrymen go forth into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature, and disciple to Himself every nation under the skies. How imperial this Proclamation of the unlearned Carpenter of Nazareth and nailed Victim of Calvary! How majestically the Son of Abraham dilates into the Son of Man! How unspeakably sublime His attitude, as without purse or sword or crown He stands on the Galilean mount and exclaims: "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth"! Verily, Jesus Christ is our Peace: for He hath made both Jew and Gentile one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, and made the two into one new man in Himself, so making peace, reconciling us both unto God into one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity: for through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. The Great Commission was not only the birth-hour of Foreign Missions: it was also the birth-hour of the one Holy Catholic Church throughout all lands and times. The door of that Holy Catholic Church still stands open to every human being. "Go ye into all the world and proclaim the Good News to every creature. Make not a solitary exception. Whatever the nationality, whether Jew or Greek, Scythian or Mongolian, Nubian or Indian; whatever the religion, whether Hebrew or Buddhist, Mohammed-

Isaiah xlv. 22.

Eph. ii. 11-22

dan or Fetich ; whatever the character, whether Pharisee or blasphemer, Sadducee or felon : go tell them all that they are My brothers, and that My Father and their Father calls them back to His bosom."

"Baptizing them into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost." "Baptizing."

Matt. xxviii. 19.

It was an ancient word, but henceforth it is to take on a new celestial meaning. Hitherto it had been only a ceremonial ablution, or ritual cleansing, or at most a baptism unto repentance. Henceforth it was to be a Christian action : a baptism into faith in Jesus Christ as risen from the dead. From the time of this Epiphany on the Galilean Mount until the coming and perpetual Epiphany, Baptism stands forth as the sign of the Christian Religion, the badge of the heavenly, saving Faith. And well may the Risen Lord thus appoint it : for Baptism is a pictorial summary of Christianity itself, wherein is told to the eye the story of what Christ has suffered and achieved for us, and of what we mean by God's grace to suffer and achieve for Christ. Know ye not that all we who were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death ? We were therefore buried with Him through our baptism into His death : that as Christ was raised up from the dead through the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life ; for if we have been united with Him in His death, we shall be also united with Him in His resurrection ; buried with Him in our baptism, wherein also we were raised up with Him through our faith in the operation of God, Who

Rom. vi. 3-5.

Col. ii. 12.

raised Him from the dead. Yes, Baptism is the symbol of Christianity: it is the Gospel of the Nazarene crystallized into a pictorial formula, or rather vitalized into a conscious, joyous incarnation. "Baptizing *them*." Baptizing whom? Manifestly those of every nation who have become disciples. Go, make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them, even those who accept your Good News. Baptism, then, is the first act of discipleship. It is an open declaration to the world that we have changed Masters, that henceforth we will own no allegiance except to the Galilean King. Having become disciples of the Nazarene, the first thing we are to do is to confess the Nazarene by being baptized even as the Nazarene has commanded us. "Spirit-baptism" then fails to meet the command of the Risen Lord. Glorious indeed is the promised Baptism of the Spirit: Blessed are we if we have been made sharers therein. But baptism in the Spirit, blessed as it is, in no wise meets the behest of the Galilean Epiphany. That baptism is a physical act, a bodily baptism in water, administered by those who are authorized to baptize: "Go ye into all the world, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them." But how much does this baptism mean? Is it its own end? Or does it go beyond itself, carrying a great moral truth? Let the Risen Lord Himself answer: "Baptizing them into the *Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost*." It is the first formal distinct hint of that most august of all mysteries, the ever blessed and adorable Trinity: Three Persons and One God, Unity

in Trinity and Trinity in Unity. Observe: He does not say, "The Names of the Father and the Son and the Spirit"; neither does He say, "The Name of the Father and the Name of the Son and the Name of the Spirit"; but He uses the singular number and applies it to the mysterious Tri-Unity—"The Name of the Father and the Son and the Spirit." Observe, too, the infinite ease, or calm sense of truthfulness, with which the Nazarene asserts His tremendous claim of Equality in the Divine Peerage of Father and Spirit: "The Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost." Observe also the preposition which the Lord uses: "In," or (more correctly) "*Into*": meaning with reference to: that is to say: Baptizing them into the recognition of and allegiance to and participation in and communion with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Baptism then is not baptism into a Church, except as a church votes so to regard it: Baptism is baptism into the sphere of the Triune God. Glory be to the Father and to the *Gloria Patri*. Son and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." "*Teaching* them." Observe the order of the Lord's injunctions: First, announce the Glad Tidings: secondly, make disciples: thirdly, baptize them: fourthly, teach them. Let us beware of reversing the Lord's order: first teaching or imposing creed-tests, and then baptizing. No: the Lord's order is this: first, baptize

Matt. xxviii. 20.

the converts: then, teach them. First, loyalty to Jesus Christ: then, instruction in Jesus Christ's truths. First, the Gospels: then, the Epistles. First, the Glad Tidings: then, the Articles of Faith. For the Christian life on its passive or receptive side is a ceaseless tuitionship. Christ's commonest title was Master: i. e. Teacher. Christ's commonest act was that of teaching. The commonest title of Christ's followers was disciples: i. e. pupils. And as it was then, so it is still. The Church is an Academy, knowing no recess: a University, knowing no vacation. The most essential condition of churchly prosperity is under God the fostering of the Sunday-school and the being personally engaged in it. Pitiable the professor of religion, whether layman or minister, who imagines that he has graduated from the University of the Church, and no longer needs Christian instruction. Teaching and being taught is as much a Divine ordinance as baptizing and being baptized. But what are we to teach? Let the Risen Lord Himself again answer: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I *commanded* you." The Church's text-book then is not so much theological as ethical: not so much a system of Christian metaphysics as a manual of daily practice: not so much a body of Divinity as a doing all things whatsoever Jesus Christ has commanded us. And Jesus Christ's Commandments include not only His formal ordinances, as, e. g., Baptism and Communion: not only His articulate mandates, as, e. g., the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount: His Commandments include also the un-

spoken behests of His own personal example and character and spirit. Jesus Christ Himself is the true and everlasting Text-book.

Thirdly : The Majestic Alternatives : "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be damned." Let us ponder these expressions carefully: for they are big with everlasting destinies. "He that *believeth*." Believeth what? Simply this—the Gospel, or Glad Tidings: to wit: that Jesus the Nazarene was the Christ of God, sent by Him into the world to be the Divine Mediator between God and man, and this by dying for us and rising again. "He that believeth and is *baptized*"; that is to say: he that believes that Jesus Christ has died and risen again, and pictorially sets forth that belief by being buried in the baptismal tomb, and by being raised out of it: for this is the meaning of Christian Baptism: Buried with Him in our baptism, in which also we were raised to life with Him through faith in the working of God, Who raised Him from the dead. And, observe, the belief precedes the baptism: "He that believeth and is *baptized*." We are not to be baptized in order that we may believe: but having been Divinely brought to believe, we are to symbolize our belief by being baptized. "He that believeth and is *baptized* shall be *saved*." Is Baptism then a saving ordinance, an ordinance essential to salvation? Most certainly not. The penitent robber of the Cross was never baptized: yet the moment he died he entered Paradise. On the other hand, multitudes, I fear, have been baptized, who

The Majestic Alternatives.
Mark xvi. 16.

Col. ii. 12.

Luke xxiii. 43.

have never believed : and therefore they are among the lost. Nevertheless it is never safe for him who believes to neglect baptism. It is with baptism as it is with prayer or charity or any other Christian duty. The discharge of none of these duties saves us : by Grace alone are we saved, through faith. And yet, unless we obey all the Lord's precepts as made known to us, unless we obey His mandates to pray and love and give and forgive and be baptized, we prove by our very neglect that we have never really believed, and so are among the condemned. This, and this only, is the sense in which it is true that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. "But he that believeth not shall be damned," or (more correctly) "*he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.*" Observe : The Lord does not say, "He that believeth not and is not baptized shall be condemned." He simply says, "He that disbelieveth shall be condemned." That is to say : He who disbelieves that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ of God, he who does not personally absorb into his own experience and consciousness the sense of the blessed truth that Jesus Christ has been slain and raised for him, will be condemned : and this in spite of the fact that he may have been baptized ten thousand times. These two things then are absolutely certain : Baptism, however important, will not save us; Disbelief, however learned, will damn us. And observe the majestic imperialism, or, if you prefer, dogmatism, of this utterance of the Galilean Mount. "A man may read the Ethics of Aristotle," says the author of "Ecce Deus,"

“and treat the reasoning with contempt without endangering his fate: but no man can read Christ’s sayings without finding ‘saved’ upon one side and ‘damned’ upon the other. Is this dogmatism on the part of Christ? Undoubtedly. God must be dogmatic. If God could hesitate, He would not be God. Do we stumble at the solemn words, ‘He that believeth shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned’? Why should we? An agriculturist says practically: ‘Go ye into all the world, and say to every creature that there is to be a particular season for sowing seed: he that believeth shall be saved—shall have a harvest: he that believeth not shall be lost—shall have no harvest.’ There is thus a Gospel of Agriculture: why not a Gospel of Salvation? Men’s disbelief of God will damn them in farming: why not in religion? Does God speak decisively in one case and hesitatingly in the other? There must be a climacteric point—a point of saving or damning—in all the declarations of God, because He has spoken the *ultimate* word on all the subjects which He has disclosed. The *truth* upon any matter, high or low, is the point of salvation or damnation.” It is precisely as Jesus Himself had said in the temple during Passover week: “If any one hear *My* words and keep them not, I do not judge him: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world: he that rejecteth *Me* and receiveth not *My* words hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”

John xii. 47, 48.

The Majestic Endowment.

Mark xvi. 17, 18.

Acts v. 16; viii.
7; xvi. 18; xix.
12.

Acts ii. 4-11; x.
46; xix. 6.

1 Cor. xiv.

Acts xxviii. 8-6.

Acts xxviii. 8.

Fourthly: The Majestic Endowment: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In My Name shall they cast out demons: they shall speak with new tongues: they shall take up serpents: and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." All which was literally fulfilled in the Apostolic Era. In Christ's Name the Apostles did cast out demons in Jerusalem and Samaria and Philippi and Ephesus. They also did speak with new tongues: and not only they, but also the laity of Caesarea and Ephesus and Corinth. Paul did handle the viper of Melita and received no harm. Although there is no Scriptural record of the fulfillment of the promise that if they drank any deadly thing it would not hurt them, yet very early traditions assert that Justus Barsabas and the disciple whom Jesus loved were compelled to drink deadly potions, and yet they were not harmed. Paul did lay his hand on the father of Publius as he lay sick of fever and dysentery, and he recovered. And I firmly believe that the same signs could be wrought to-day, if they were really needed. It is purely an assumption to affirm that the Age of Miracles has for ever passed away. If miracles are in the nature of things impossible now, they were impossible then: if they were possible then, they are possible now. It is not then a question of possibility: it is only a question of necessity. Miracles are no longer needed: but if they were, they certainly would be wrought. In all events, there is a sense in which the promise of the Risen Lord that signs would accompany be-

lievers is still being fulfilled : it is the spiritual sense. The Church of the living God is daily casting out in Christ's name the demons of pride and malice and covetousness and intemperance and vice of every kind. She is daily putting a new tongue into nature and science and history and politics and business and literature and art. She is daily curbing the serpent power and even subsidizing it, making the very wrath of man to praise her God. She is daily embarking in what seem to be foolish and mortal enterprises, as, e. g., the missionary service, and she receives no hurt. She is daily laying her hands on those who are sick in heart and dying of sin, and they are being healed. And she works these wonders, not because she practices the spells of any Egyptian magic, but because she conjures with the Name which is above every name.

Lastly : The Majestic Promise : "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." What though the Risen Lord is about to ascend ? It is only His body which is to vanish. He Himself is to remain : and this in the person and work of the promised Paraclete, the second Comforter. Observe the personality of the promise : "Lo, *I*." The Risen Lord is to be with us, not as a mere celestial Statue, not as a mere Idea or Abstraction : He is to be with us as the Real Presence : "Lo, *I am with you*" : the very expression recalling the august I AM of the annunciation to Moses by the Burning Bush. Yes, Jesus Christ, to Whom at His resurrection was given all authority in heaven and on earth, is still carrying on a "posthumous

The Majestic Promise.
Matt. xxviii. 20.

Ex. iii. 14.

Acts x. 38.

ministry." He is still in the world, still going about and doing good, still forgiving, protecting, guiding, strengthening, cheering, perfecting. "Lo, I am *with you*." And who are those to whom He makes this blessed promise ? Even every one who believes that Jesus has risen, and is baptized, observing all things whatsoever He has commanded us. He was with the Eleven, and the more than five hundred. He was with the Christians of Rome and Corinth and Galatia and Ephesus and Philippi and Colosse and Thessalonica and the seven churches of Asia Minor. He was with the Church of the Catacombs and with the Waldenses and the Reformers and the Puritans and the Covenanters. He is with the Christians of London and Berlin and Rome and Madagascar and Nellore and San Francisco and Philadelphia. He is with you, O Christians of the shop and the mart and the school and the home and the sick-chamber and the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Every human being who follows the Lamb of God, like Him going about to do good, converting sinners from the error of their ways, building up the body of Christ, fulfilling his own vocation as an apostle or missionary sent from God ; every Christian, however weak or obscure or young, belongs to the true Apostolical Succession :

James v. 20.

Eph. iv. 12.

John Keble.

Both theirs and ours Thou art,
As we and they are Thine :
Kings, Prophets, Patriarchs, all have part
Along the sacred line.

"Lo, I am with you *always*." It is not that the Risen Lord occasionally visits His people : He

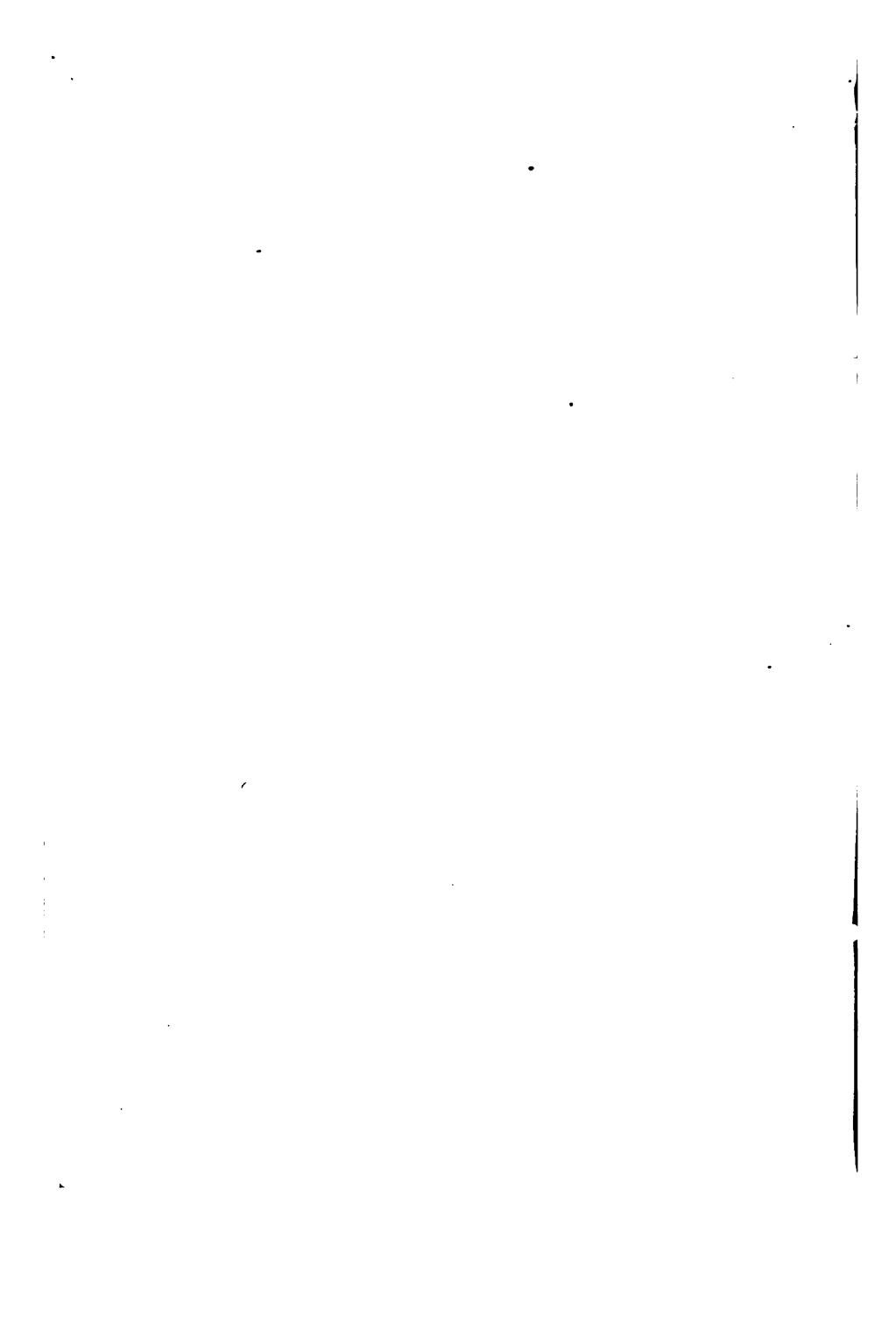
is with them perennially, literally, "all the days." "Lo, I am with you always, *unto the end of the world*" : that is to say, until the consummation of the *Æon*. Now He is with us in spirit : then, at the end of this Dispensation, He will be with us in body also. "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up toward heaven ? This same Jesus, Who hath been taken from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as ye beheld Him go into heaven." And so the Holy Evangel begins and ends with Emmanuel : God with us.

Acts i. 11.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Matt. i. 23.

Rev. xxi. 20.



THE EPIPHANY TO THE SEVEN.

After these things Jesus shewed Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed He Himself.

JOHN xxi. 1.



IX.

THE EPIPHANY TO THE SEVEN.

No one can read the accounts of the great Forty Days without being struck with their mysterious character. Where was the body of the Risen Lord during this period ? In Heaven ? On earth ? Did He divest Himself of it altogether ? All we know is that, ever and anon, now here and now there, He suddenly made miraculous Epiphany of Himself. And now the Apostles are back again in Galilee, in the neighborhood of beautiful Gennesaret, perhaps sojourning in Peter's house at Capernaum. Bound together by the ties of a blessed acquaintance, and especially by the memories of a holy colleagueship in the Apostolate, these Galileans naturally keep close companionship. Here, then, by the side of that Gennesaret where in earlier days these fishermen had so often cast their nets, do we find them again. Probably we should not go far astray were we to imagine them speaking of the past and forecasting the future ; recalling Parable and Miracle, Crucifixion and Resurrection, Epiphanies of Jerusalem and Galilean Mount ; wondering whether they should ever

The Unsuccessful Fishing.
John xxi. 1-8.

see the Risen Lord again, or what they themselves should do. One day, as seven of them are talking and debating, now hoping for the best, now foreboding the worst, Peter, whose practical sense makes him keenly alive to the fact that he is in a world where he must eat in order to live, exclaims, "I go a-fishing." Peter is a magnetic character, and his example is instantaneously contagious: the others exclaim, "We also will go with thee." The names of five of these seven we know: Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, James and John—sons of Zebedee and Salome; possibly the two others were Philip and Andrew. Entering their boat, they cast their net hour after hour, but all in vain. Day creeps into evening, evening into night, night into morning, and still they cast and cast and cast, and still they catch nothing. Even so it is with us in our fishing for souls if Jesus Christ is not with us. Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the keeper watcheth in vain.

Psalm cxxvii. 1.

The Sudden
Epiphany.

John xxi. 4-14.

John xx. 14.

Luke xxiv. 16.

At length, as the dawn breaks, the Risen Lord Himself stands on the shore. For some reason or other, they do not recognize Him. Perhaps it is because they are not expecting Him, and it is still morning twilight and they can not see distinctly. Perhaps it is because some change has come over His risen body like that which on Resurrection Sunday had prevented Mary Magdalene and the two disciples journeying to Emmaus from readily recognizing Him. In all events, Jesus Himself stands on the beach, but the disciples know not

that it is Jesus. A friendly voice comes to them from the dim shore : "Children, have ye anything to eat ?" Translating the question into our English idiomatic equivalent, it is as though the Stranger asked, "Boys, what luck ?" "None," answer the weary fishermen. Again the friendly voice is heard : "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye will find." Disheartened by their ill luck during the night, they readily enough accept the Stranger's suggestion, and cast their net as He directs, and, behold, they are not able to pull it in for the multitude of the fishes. Among these seven fishermen are at least three—Simon Peter and James and John—who, many a month before, had toiled all night long on this same Gennesaret and had taken nothing, but who, at the command of the suddenly appearing Nazarene, had pushed out into the deep and let down their net for a draught, and inclosed a great multitude of fishes, so that their net began to break. When, therefore, on this second occasion, obeying the command of the Stranger to cast their net on the right side of the boat, they, after toiling fruitlessly all night long, are suddenly unable to draw the net on account of the multitude of the fishes, John, who had been present on the former occasion, and whose perceptions are quickened by the instinct of love, exclaims, "It is the Lord." No sooner does Peter hear that glad word than, with the impetuosity so characteristic of him, he plunges into the lake and swims toward his dear Master. Meantime the other disciples row ashore (it was only about a hundred yards distant), dragging

Luke v. 1-11.

along the heavy net. Arrived on the strand, they find to their surprise a fire of coals, and fish laid thereon, and bread. But although the Lord has graciously prepared in part a repast for His weary disciples, He would have them blend their toil with His gift, and therefore He saith to them, "Bring of the fish which ye have now caught." Peter draws the net to land, full of great fishes—a hundred and fifty and three; and, although there are so many, yet the net is not broken. Jesus saith to them, "Come and eat." A holy, silent awe pervades the group. Not one of them for very reverence dares ask Him, "Who art Thou?" knowing that it is the Lord. He graciously draws near, and, as in days of yore, takes the bread and the fish and gives to them.

The Reinstate-
ment of Pe-
ter.

John xxi. 15-17.

Matt. xxvi. 82.

Luke v. 1-11.

John xviii. 18.

Matt. xxvi. 69-
74.

And now occurs one of the most pathetic incidents in Sacred Story—the Reinstatement of Simon Peter. Observe how everything has tended to prepare the fallen Apostle for the holy scene: This mysterious meeting by Gennesaret in Galilee, again fulfilling the promise uttered on the night of the betrayal, "After I am risen again I will go before you into Galilee"; this miraculous draught of fishes exactly answering to that former miraculous draught, when Peter was first called to the Apostolate; this fire of coals in the gray dawn answering to that brazier of coals in the palace of Caiaphas, when, in the morning watch of the cock-crowing, Peter had thrice denied his Lord; this tender greeting by the Risen Lord, as though denial and apostasy had never occurred—all this must have touched Peter's heart to the quick, and

made him exquisitely sensitive to the scene about to follow. That scene is described thus: When they had finished their meal, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?" Peter saith to Him, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." Jesus saith to him, "Feed My lambs." He saith to him again the second time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" Peter saith to Him, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." Jesus saith to him, "Feed My sheep." He saith to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Lovest thou Me?" and he said to Him, "Lord, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee." Jesus saith to him, "Feed My sheep." Each clause of this exquisite narrative demands special pondering.

"Simon, son of Jonas." Observe: the Lord ^{Simon, Son of Jonas.} does not say—"Peter"; He says—"Simon, son of Jonas." The choice of this designation is touchingly significant. For it was not as Peter, son of Rock, but as Simon, son of flesh and blood, that he had denied his Lord. And therefore it is as Simon, son of flesh and blood, that that Lord now addresses him in unspoken remembrance of his fall. The more he loves the Divine Man, the less is he Simon, son of Jonas, the more is he Peter, son of God. Not many days hence, amid the flood of the Pentecostal Baptism, Simon, child of flesh and blood, shall be solidified into Peter, Rock of God. Then shall be brought to pass the prophecy spoken at his conversion to Jesus Christ,

John i. 42.

by the Jordan : Jesus looked upon him and said : “Thou art Simon, the son of Jonas : thou shalt be called Cephas” (which is by interpretation Peter, that is, Rock). “Simon, son of Jonas, *lovest thou Me?*” Remembering all that has occurred, how divine a thing is that word—“lovest”! It is all the more cutting because under the circumstances so unspeakably tender. “Simon, son of Jonas, *lovest thou Me more than these?*”

More than these?

What another painful reminiscence to our poor Peter! He alone of the Apostles had said : “Though all shall be offended in Thee, yet will I never be offended.” He alone of the Apostles had openly, conspicuously, blasphemously denied his Lord. How poignant the question : “*Lovest thou Me more than these?*” Peter saith to Him : “Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.” There is a subtile, delicate change of the verb in Peter’s reply which does not appear in our version, and which is most difficult to express or make clear to one not familiar with the Original : and yet it is this very change of the verb which gives such pathetic delicacy to Peter’s answer. The verb which Jesus uses—“*Αγαπᾷς*, Lovest thou Me?”—is, so to speak, a religious word, expressing the highest kind of love, love in the sphere of the spiritual and divine, as, e. g., in St. John’s saying : “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us.”

Matt. xxvi. 38.

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1 John iv. 10.

John xi. 3.

esty with which Peter changes the word. Jesus uses the larger, loftier, diviner verb: “*Ἄγαπές*, Lovest thou Me?” Peter dares not answer: “Yea, *ἀγαπῶ*, I love Thee, as angels love God.” Humbled by the remembrance of his fall, he speaks softly, in the sphere of this world’s loves: “Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that *φιλῶ*—I love Thee—as friend loveth friend.” Jesus had asked in the language of Heaven: Peter dares reply only in the language of earth. And yet there is an ingenuous, sacred confidence in his reply. It is as though he had said: “Others may misjudge me: these brother apostles, those servants who stood by the brazier of coals in Caiaphas’s palace that awful morning, may have thought that I had lost all love for Thee, that I had disowned Thee for ever: but Thou, Lord, Thou the Omniscient, knowest that I love Thee.” Jesus saith to him: “*Feed My lambs.*” Observe, first, the verb: *Feed My Lambs.* “*FEED My lambs.*” It is easy enough to decree, and scold, and whip: it is not so easy to feed. And food is what lambs especially need. They can live without edicts; they can not live without food. Need I say that the Holy Bible, Truth as it is in Jesus, is the spirit’s true food? Jesus said to them: “I am the Bread of Life, the Living Bread which cometh down from Heaven; if any one eat of this Bread he shall live for ever: and the Bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” Observe, secondly, the pronoun: “*Feed My lambs.*” The flock then is not Peter’s—it is Peter’s Lord’s; the flock does not belong to the under-shepherd—it

John vi. 27-58.

1 Peter ii. 25.

belongs to the Chief Shepherd. Did not Peter have this holy scene by Gennesaret in mind when many a year afterward he wrote: “Ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls”? and again:

1 Peter v. 2-4.

“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly, not for base gain, but of a ready mind, neither as lording it over your allotted charge, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away—the amaranthine crown of His glory.” Yet the Roman Pontiff, Peter’s so-called “Successor,” wearing the tiara, and sealing his briefs with the Fisherman’s Ring, styles himself the Chief Shepherd, *Pastor pastorum*—and all the faithful throughout the world his flock. Observe, thirdly, the noun: “Feed My LAMBS.” The Lord does not say—“sheep”; the Lord does say—“lambs.” And, first, there are lambs in years. Indeed I believe that in God’s sight there are many more lambs in His flock than sheep. I believe that if we had angelic vision we should discern more recruits for Christ’s army in the nursery than in the college or the mart. They brought little children unto Him that He might touch them; and His disciples rebuked those that brought them: but Jesus, seeing it, was much displeased, and said unto them: “Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as

Mark x. 18-16.

a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein." And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them caressingly, and blessed them. Again: there are lambs in experience. We do not begin the Christian life full grown. When we become Christians, we are born a second time, and therefore begin the new life not as adults but as babes. Little children, young men, fathers: this is the order of the Christian life.

Be it ours then to feed the flock of God like a shepherd, gathering the lambs with our arms, and carrying them in our bosoms. Jesus saith to Peter again the second time: "Simon, son of Jonas, ἀγαπᾶς, lovest thou Me?" Peter saith unto Him: "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that φιλῶ, I love Thee." Jesus saith unto him: "Feed My sheep."

Observe, first, the change of verb. In the first injunction the Lord said: "Βόσκε, Feed My lambs"; in the second He says: "Πολυαύε, Tend My sheep."

No one word will translate this latter verb—*poluave*; it means to feed, lead, guard, rule, tend, keep, be a shepherd. For, although we are not to lord it over God's flock, yet we are to have oversight thereof, shepherding the Church of God which He purchased with His own blood, and over which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers or bishops. Obey then those

1 John ii. 12-14.

Isaiah xl. 11.

Tend as well as feed.

1 Peter v. 2, 8.

Acts xx. 28.

Heb xiii. 7, 17.

who have the rule over you, and speak unto you the Word of God, for they watch for your souls as they that must give account; that they may do this with joy and not with grief. Observe, secondly, the change of noun. In the first commission the Lord said: "Feed My ἀπίδια, My

Psalm ex

The
Epiph
John xxi.

John xx.

Luke xx.

Thou knowest me throughout; Thou art acquainted with all my thoughts from the blessed hour Thou didst call me by the Jordan to this solemn moment; Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee dearly." Happy we if we also can say the same. And we may if we will use our privilege. Our love to Christ, practically speaking, can be certainly and easily known. It is a vicious, unchristian theology which teaches us to sing, even though the pious Newton be our poet:

'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought:
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I His or am I not?

Can you not tell whether you feel warm or cold, whether you love your father or not? Must you lose common sense in the realm of religion? Strange theology this which in a world lighted by the Sun of Righteousness puts out our own eyesight. Jesus saith unto Peter, "Feed My sheep." Observe, the Lord takes up again His first verb. In the first commission He said, "*Bόσκε*, Feed"; in the second He said, "*Ποιμανε*, Tend, shepherd"; in the third He says again, "*Bόσκε*, Feed." After all, then, feeding is the main thing. Observe how Romanism exalts the ruling —witness such words as pope, cardinal, primate, bishop, prelate, diocesan, see, crosier, throne, tiara, etc. Be it for us to be content with being shepherds! Such is the way in which Peter was reinstated in the holy office he had forfeited. And observe how exquisitely it was done. Not a word

of rebuke does the Risen Lord utter; only the threefold question, "Lovest thou Me?" and the threefold commission, "Feed My lambs; Tend My sheep; Feed My sheep." It was indeed a crisis in Peter's life. Hitherto he had been tended as a sheep; henceforth he is to tend as a shepherd. Having been converted—that is to say, having turned again to his Master—he is henceforth to strengthen his brethren. Ah! it is not enough that we be evangelists, winning converts to Jesus Christ: we must also be pastors and teachers, educating shepherds, tending and feeding the flock of God, and so perfecting the saints. And this is the privilege of the laity not less than of the ministry. When the laity really do their work, they too are really a ministry, a true diaconate. And evermore keep in mind that love to Jesus Christ is the essential qualification of shepherding. "Lovest thou Me?" then "Feed My lambs; Tend My sheep; Feed My sheep."

Peter's Horoscope

And now the Risen Lord, having reinstated His fallen Peter in the Apostolate, proceeds to foretell his destiny, casting as it were his horoscope: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young thou girdedst thyself and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old thou wilt stretch forth thy hands, and another will gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." It is as though the Master had said: "Peter, now thou art young and buoyant: thou hast the sense of freedom and vigor: thou girdest thy own mantle, asking no one to help thee, and walkest whithersoever thou choosest. But it shall not

John xxi 18.

always be so : mighty sorrows are before thee ; a great office like thine must have its great woe ; when old age comes upon thee, thou wilt stretch forth thy hands, but it will be as a victim ; another will gird thee, but it will be to carry thee whither thou wouldest not go." This He said, signifying by what manner of death Peter would glorify God. And now let us pause for a moment to see what lesson this casting of Peter's horoscope has for us. What a strong and joyous thing is the springtime of life ! The roseate flush of health ; the round, lithe figure ; the quick, elastic step ; the bright, dancing eye ; the honest, merry laugh ; the sense of freedom, strength, hope, joy, abounding life ; the girding itself and walking whithersoever it wills. Oh ! of all beautiful pictures on which these earthly eyes gaze, none is so beautiful as the picture of an innocent, healthful, blithesome youthhood. And yet the experienced artist detects in this bright picture some lines of gloom. There is a certain lack of aimfulness and self-control and poise ; a certain self-confidence and waywardness and self-will that does not brook control ; a certain lack of the sense of responsibility and duty of a life of self-sacrifice for the good of others, which show that the character is not yet matured. There are heights of moral greatness to which this strong and radiant youth has not yet attained. For there is something grander than even a life of action : it is a life of passion. Glorious is a strong will ; but that will is strongest, reaching its culminating point of glory, not when it has its own way for its own ends, but when it

Matt. xxvi. 89.

1 John iv. 8.

has its own way in freely laying down itself at the feet of the Heavenly Father, exclaiming, not in the spirit of stoicism or proud submission to inexorable Fate, but in the spirit of a loving choice, "Thy will, O Father, not mine, be done." And this voluntary taking on of the Father's will in place of our own, this cheerful entering into the restraints of the Father's plan and control, is the latest and richest triumph of our earthly life. It generally comes through the avenue of a bitter experience, borne into our souls on the bier of blighted purposes and crucified self. See how affliction toned down the self-reliant craft of youthful Jacob into the trustful humility of aged Israel; the hot zeal of the son of Pharaoh's daughter into the patient meekness of Sinai's law-giver; the fiery vehemence of the youthful son of Zebedee calling down fire from Heaven to blast the inhospitable Samaritans into the loving apostleship of the aged John, writing "God is love"; the fierce impetuosity of Simon, son of flesh and blood, into the stalwart submissiveness of Peter, Rock of God. And all this marks a growth. This passage from liberty as license to liberty as loyalty, from self-will to the will not to be self-willed, is an ascent of character. It is God's law of spiritual growth. Life begun in action is perfected in passion. It was conspicuously so with our Peter. In the heedless liberty of young manhood he denied rather than die; in the thoughtful liberty of old age he cheerfully accepted the Cross. Many a year after this memorable scene by Gennesaret, when Death was staring him in the face,

he calmly wrote these words : “ I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance : knowing that shortly I must lay aside this tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me.” There is a legend that when the Roman persecution under Nero burst forth the Christians besought Peter to fly. For a moment he yielded. Meeting in his flight along the Appian Way the Risen Lord, he exclaimed, “ *Domine, quo vadis ?* ” Lord, whither goest Thou ? ” “ I am going to Rome,” the Master replied, “ to be crucified a second time.” Peter instantly returned, and bravely met his fate. Such is the legend entwined around the little Church in the Appian Way, to this day called *Domine Quo Vadis*. False in the letter, it is true in the spirit. Even in the bravest there is an instinctive recoil from death.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being ere resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind ?

Thomas Gray.

But the recoil was only momentary. According to tradition, Peter died by crucifixion, meeting his fate heroically, even requesting that he might be crucified with his head downward, as though unworthy of sharing completely his Saviour’s death. And thus he fulfilled his Master’s saying on the night of the betrayal : “ Whither I go thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow Me afterward.” And thus by the manner of his death he did glorify God.

John xiii. 36.

Follow Me.

John xxi. 19-22.

Luke ix. 23.

John i. 43.

And now the Risen Lord, having foretold Peter's destiny, saith unto him, "Follow Me." I suppose that, as He uttered this phrase so characteristic of Him, He withdrew from the group of Disciples, and began to walk along the strand, and Peter actually followed Him. Perhaps the Lord desired to have a private, confidential interview with Peter. However this may have been, I can not doubt that these words, "Follow Me," had a double meaning, to be taken figuratively as well as literally. In fact, this whole scene by Gennesaret from beginning to end seems to have been symbolical. The casting the net, the miraculous draught, the fire of coals, the triple question, the triple commission: each incident was a sort of parable. Not the least significant of these parables was this walking along the beach, accompanied by the characteristic behest, "Follow Me." It is as though the Risen Lord had said: "Enter into the fellowship of My life: take on My character, My purity, gentleness, meekness, patience, self-sacrificing spirit, ministering love, My sufferings, obloquy, martyrdom, My resurrection. If any one desireth to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me." Thus the Lord ends His ministry, even as He had begun it by the Jordan, with His idiomatic mandate, "Follow Me." And this mandate was and still is and ever will be the sum and substance of Christianity. Jesus Himself is our creed: Christ is Christianity itself. Peter obeys his Master. But as he follows Him along the strand, he turns round and sees John also follow-

ing. No wonder that the Disciple whom Jesus loved, and who had leaned on His breast on Pass-over-night and asked, saying, "Lord, who is he that betrayeth Thee?" feels that he too has the right to follow. But no sooner does Peter perceive him following than he asks, "Lord, what shall this man do?" It was a most natural question. Jesus had just foretold his own destiny. How natural to ask, "What shall be the fate of my dear fellow Apostle?" But, natural as the question was, the Lord seized it as the occasion for solemnly declaring that the following Jesus is an intensely personal affair: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is it to thee? Follow thou Me." What sovereign majesty of language in thus asserting for Himself disposal of human destinies: "If I will that he tarry till I come"! But let us keep foremost in mind the momentous truth here declared—namely, Religion is a personal matter. It is as though He had said: "What matters it to thee what becomes of John? Not that I blame thee for being anxious about his destiny. But, after all, his fate affects not thy duty. Follow thou Me." Yes, Christian experience is in its very nature inevitably personal. In so far as it is an experience at all, it is and must be a personal experience. And the Christian has but one thing to do: it is to follow the Lamb Rev. xiv. 4. whithersoever He goeth.

And now notice a long-prevailing misapprehension and the Apostolic correction of it: "Then went this saying abroad among the brethren that that disciple was not to die; and yet Jesus said not

A Misconception Rectified.
John xxi. 23.

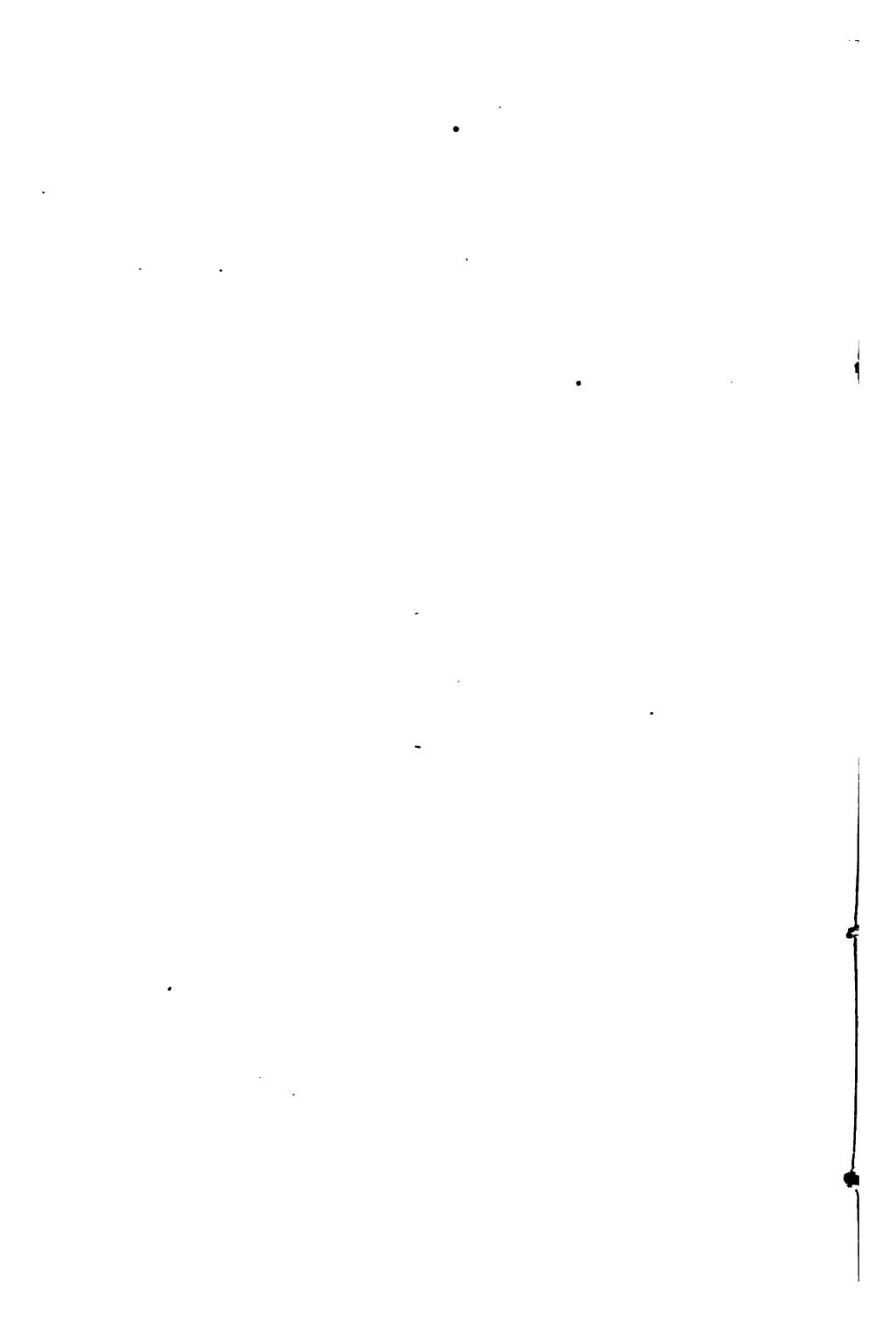
to him that he was not to die, but 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?'" For a long time the belief did prevail that John would survive until the Second Coming. In the Middle Ages there were many who believed that John was still alive. This belief is the occasion of the touching legend of St. John and the Pilgrim, and is enshrined in the bas-reliefs of the frieze of the shrine of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. The belief is still partially commemorated by the Greek Church in the Feast of the Translation of the Body of St. John. And yet John himself, writing his Gospel in his old age, corrects the misapprehension of the Risen Lord's words: "This report therefore went abroad among the brethren, that this disciple was not to die; and yet Jesus did not say to him, 'He will not die,' but 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is it to thee?'" It is a fine instance of what is constantly occurring: great and permanent falsehoods growing out of misapprehension and misquotation. Take heed then how ye hear and how ye quote. And yet there is a sense in which it is true that John will remain till the Lord returns. There is reason for believing with Schelling that Peter, Paul, and John are types of three Ecclesiastical Ages, or of the Church in its successive stages of development. Thus Peter is the Founder, Paul the Propagator, John the Perfecter. Peter represents the Church Jewish, Paul the Church Gentile, John the Church Catholic and Spiritual—Catholic because Spiritual. Peter is the Apostle of Works, or the Letter; Paul the Apostle of Faith,

or the Spirit; John the Apostle of Love, or Perfection: for Love includes both Faith and Works, being rooted in Faith and fruiting in Works. Peter thus represents the Church of the Past, the Church of Form; Paul represents the Church of the Present, the Church of Creed; John represents the Church of the Future, the Church of Love. And the greatest of these is Love, and Love abideth for ever. This is the sense in which it seems to be true that John will tarry till his Lord and our Lord returns.

1 Cor. xiii. 13.

Merciful Lord, we beseech Thee to cast Thy bright beams of light upon Thy Church, that it, being instructed by the doctrine of Thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist St. John, may so walk in the light of Thy truth that it may at length attain to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

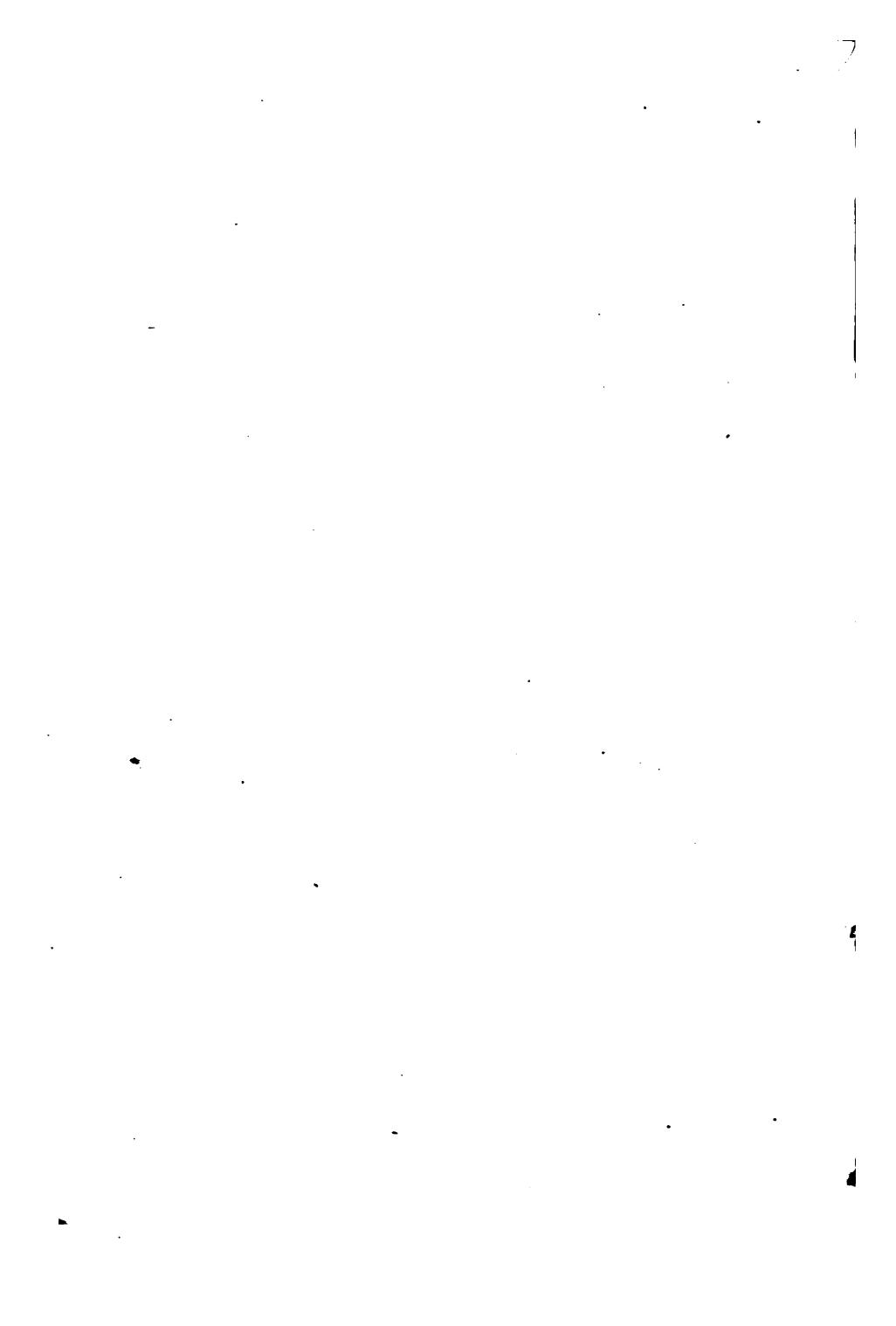
Collect for St.
John's Day.



THE
EPIPHANY OF THE ASCENSION.

While they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES i. 10, 11.



X.

THE EPIPHANY OF THE ASCENSION.

AND now we come to the Final Interview. They therefore, having come together, asked Him, saying: "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said unto them: "It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father hath placed under His own authority. But ye shall receive power by the Holy Spirit coming upon you; and ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

The Final Interview.
Acts 1. 6-8.

"Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom unto Israel?" O ye poor, ignorant, selfish apostles! have ye been the daily pupils of the Lord these years, and have ye not yet learned the nature of His kingdom? But let us not be too severe with these Hebrew Apostles. Their expectation that the promised Messianic kingdom would be a political as well as spiritual kingdom, involving the emancipation of Israel from the yoke of Rome, and its reëstablishment in more than the splendor of Solomon's reign, was apparently well founded. Such a king-

dom, so it certainly seemed, was the glowing theme of many an ancient prophecy. When the Messiah Himself was about to be born, the Angel of the Annunciation said to the Virgin of Nazareth: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

Luke i. 32, 38.

Matt. ii. 1, 2.

And when He was actually born, Wise Men from the far-off pagan East came to Jerusalem, saying: "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East, and have come to worship Him." And now, although the Lord in the days of His humiliation had persistently rejected all attempts to crown Him, yet the Epiphanies of the Forty Days had been so brilliant and imperial that it seemed to these poor Jewish Apostles that the long-expected, resplendent hour had at last come. "Lord, art Thou at this time about to restore the kingdom to Israel?" But He said unto them: "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father appointed by His own authority." Observe: He neither affirms nor denies that the kingdom is to be restored again to Israel. It may be that the coming Messianic kingdom is to be a kingdom of visible as well as spiritual splendor, such as the prophets seem to foretell, and such as the Jews were expecting; or it may be that the coming kingdom is to be a kingdom of exclusively spiritual sovereignty. The Lord says nothing on this point. He leaves the question to the tuition

of the Spirit in the school of Time. All He does say is to rebuke curiosity: "It pertains not to you to know the times or seasons which the Father hath determined in accordance with His own authority." Duty, not curious knowledge, is God's law for us. The secret things belong to the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law. "But ye will receive power when the Holy Spirit cometh upon you." The anointing from the Holy One is better than the knowledge of times and seasons. The Pentecostal Spirit is more imperial than any Davidic scepter. "And ye will be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and to the end of the earth." They are the last recorded words of the Risen Lord. In uttering them He speaks not as the Son of Jewish Abraham, but as the Divine Son of Man. Thus the last recorded utterance of the ascending Lord solemnly pledges the Christian Church to the missionary enterprise. It is only as we fulfill His parting prophecy—"Ye will be My witnesses unto the end of the earth"—that we can realize His blessed promise of the Perpetual Presence: "Lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world."

And when He had spoken these things, He led them out as far as to Bethany. It was the last walk of the bodily Jesus on earth until He returns again. It was the last occasion on which it could be said that His disciples were literally His "followers"; He *led them* out. Was He visible to any but His disciples, as for the last time He

Deut. xxix. 29.

Matt. xxviii. 20.

The Ascension.

Mark xvi. 19.

Luke xxiv. 50, 51.

Acts i. 9.

threaded the streets of Jerusalem and climbed the heights of Olivet? We are not told. All we know is that He once more passed out of the gate of Jerusalem, perhaps the very gate through which He had passed when He bore His Cross;

Matt. xxvi. 36-
50.

once more crossed the Kedron, perhaps glancing for a moment where He had knelt, and where His agony had forced out the bloody sweat, and where He had been betrayed with the kiss; once more climbed the Olivet from whose brow He had gazed tearfully on the doomed city of His fathers;

Luke xix. 41.

once more descended toward the Bethany where had been His favorite home, and where He had restored the dead Lazarus to his sorrowing sisters. Why did He select this comparatively secluded spot rather than the pinnacle of the temple, or the mountain-crest itself, as the scene of His magnificent departure? Because, as I can

Matt. xxviii. 19.

not help thinking, the Risen Lord, to Whom at His resurrection had been given all authority in heaven and on earth, was still as modest as in the days when He was wont to evade admiring throngs and every attempt to crown Him. And He lifted up His hands and blessed them. What would we not give if we could know His very words? In all probability He pronounced once more His customary formula of blessing, saying to them for the last time, "Shalom! peace be unto you!" And so He ends His earthly life, even as angels on the slopes of Bethlehem had inaugurated it, with a message of peace and good will toward men. His Valediction was a Benediction. And now comes the supreme culmination. It came to

Luke ii. 14.

pass, while He was blessing them, He was parted from them, and, while they were gazing, a cloud received Him out of their sight, and He was borne up into heaven, and took His seat at the right hand of God. Behold the receding, diminishing, vanishing Form; listen to the heavenly voice, as ascending it wanes and dies away in the celestial distance; gaze on Him as He soars, not somberly, as Hercules in smoke of funereal pyre, not portentously, as Romulus in eclipse and thunder-peal, not dazzlingly, as Elijah in chariot of fire drawn by flaming steeds, but serenely, in celestial buoyancy, in the very act of blessing. Behold Him vanishing in the welcoming, effulgent glory-cloud; follow Him with the spirit's eye as, still soaring, He leaves beneath Him planet and sun and star and empyrean, until, amid the acclaims of kneeling seraphim, He takes His seat on the throne of the very heaven of heavens, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him, henceforth and for evermore KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Now Rev. xix. 16. is shouted in the deepest, augustest sense the Psalmist's Ode of the Triumphal Entry:

Lift up your heads, O ye Gates,
Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting Doors,
That the King of Glory may come in!

1 Peter iii. 22.

Psalm xxiv. 7-10.

Who, then, is the King of Glory?
The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.

Thus ends the Story of the First Advent.

And yet at this very moment most definite information is given us concerning the Second The Ineffable Promise.

Acts i. 10, 11.

Advent. For, while the disciples were looking steadfastly into heaven as He went up, lo, two men stood by them in shining apparel, who also said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, Who hath been taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven." No language can possibly be more explicit than these words of the shining ones. It is as though they had said: "O Galileans, why stand ye gazing up sorrowfully into heaven after that vanished Form as though this were to be your last glimpse of your dear Lord? This Jesus—this same bodily, visible, tangible Jesus, Whose form ye have seen, Whose voice ye have heard, Whose crucifixion scars ye have examined—this same Jesus will again come down to you from heaven: and He will come down from heaven in the very same manner in which ye have just seen Him going up into heaven, encircled with the same glory-cloud of the Shekinah, His feet, as the prophet Zechariah hath foretold, again standing upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem, on the east." No words, let me again say, can possibly be more unambiguous or emphatic than these words of the Shining Two: "This same Jesus, Who hath been taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as ye have beheld Him going into heaven." If you spiritualize here, you may spiritualize everywhere. If you deny the personal return of the bodily Jesus, you have gone a long way toward denying Entombment and Crucifixion, Galilean Ministry and Bethlehem.

Zech. xix. 4.

Such is the Story of the Final Epiphany of the Forty Days. And yet the Story would hardly be complete unless we noted the effect of that final Epiphany on the disciples. They worshiped Him: and they returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. They worshiped Him. What though He has vanished out of their sight, ascending far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named? They prostrate themselves on the hallowed spot where His blessed feet had last touched earth, and there they adore. And they returned from Olivet to Jerusalem, thus obeying the mandate of the Risen Lord: "Tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem until ye are clothed with power from on high." And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy. These Galileans then believed the promise of the Two in shining apparel: they believed that the same bodily Jesus Whom they had just seen going up into heaven would again come in the same manner: and so they returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. It is an artless token of historic veracity. Neither Pentecost, nor visions of Hebrew Peter and Roman Cornelius, nor Gentile Commission of Saul of Tarsus had yet occurred: and so these Jewish disciples of the Nazarene continue to maintain unbroken their loyalty to the ritual of their fathers, being continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.

And now let us attend to some of the lessons of the Ascension. This risen, bodily Jesus could

The Joyous
Return.
Luke xxiv. 52,
53.

Ephes. i. 21.

Luke xxiv. 49.

of course have remained on earth until now. But He chose to withdraw. Why then did He choose to withdraw? What is the moral meaning of the Ascension of Jesus Christ?

Issue of the Resurrection Estate.

1 Cor. xv. 42-44.

And, first, the Ascension was the natural issue of the Resurrection Estate. Christ's risen body was by the very fact of its being a risen body a supernatural body: and therefore it naturally, constitutionally took on a supernatural, ascension condition. The Ascension was the inevitable culmination of the Resurrection. Christ's risen body being a spiritual, celestial body, Heaven's gravitation was of course stronger than earth's.

Guaranty of Bodily Redemption.

2 Cor. v. 1-4.

Secondly: the Ascension of Jesus Christ gave assurance of our own bodily redemption. For Christ's salvation is a complete salvation, involving redemption for spirit and soul and body. It is not a Christian but a heathen notion which declares that matter is inherently evil. The Scripture nowhere teaches that the redeemed are to wander in heaven houseless, raimentless, disembodied spirits, hovering like ghostly phantoms or empty shadows in the silent spaces of eternity. It teaches that when our earthly house of this tent shall be taken down, we shall have a building from God, a house not made with hands, everlasting, in the heavens. And therefore the Apostle, being clothed with the present frail, perishable tent, groaned being burdened: not that he desired to be unclothed or disembodied, but he desired to be clothed upon with his house from heaven, that mortality might be swallowed up by life. He groaned within him-

Rom. viii. 23.

self, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of his body: not from his body, but of his body. And the redemption of the body is prophetically guaranteed in the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ. The risen body of our Lord was, as we have seen, both natural and supernatural, capable of being seen and touched and also of gliding through closed doors, capable of eating and also of ascending. It was a visible, tangible, material body which ascended: it will be a visible, tangible, material body which will descend. And herein is the assurance that we too in our resurrection estate will have bodies: visible, tangible, material bodies, capable of living a natural life on earth, capable also of ascending and living a supernatural life in heaven. What saith the Scripture? Our citizenship is in heaven: from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.

Thirdly: the Ascension of Jesus Christ cleared the way for the Spirit's Dispensation. A remarkable Scripture establishes this point. On the last great day of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried aloud, saying: "If any one thirst, let him come unto Me and drink: he that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believed on Him would receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. And the Lord Him-

Phil. iii. 20, 21.

Condition of
the Spirit's
Dispensa-
tion.

John vii. 37-39.

John xvi. 7.

self, the last night He was on earth in His suffering estate, emphatically announced: "I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I go I will send Him unto you."

"But how is this possible?" you ask. "What can possibly make good Christ's absence? What possible thing can be better than to have Him abidingly with us as our Teacher, our Counselor, our Guide, our Pattern, our Protector, our Miracle-worker, our Companion, our Friend?"

John Keble.

My Saviour, can it ever be
That I should gain by losing Thee?

"What possible harm or loss in His staying on earth, that would make His going away an advantage to us?" Ponder then a little in detail the expediency of the Lord's Ascension.

Gives us a Uni-
versal Sav-
iour.

And, first, the Spirit's advent is better than Christ's presence because the Spirit gives us a universal Saviour instead of a local. Suppose the bodily Jesus were still on earth: He could be in but one place at one time. What a perpetual Mecca His body would be, involving what costly pilgrimages, what suspensions of industries, what temptations to good works and externalities, what miseries for the poor and the sick and the aged: in short, what an unavailable Christ! For out of earth's thousand millions the bodily Jesus could be seen and heard and touched by only a few. But the Holy Spirit is universal: His very name is Pneuma, air: and air is everywhere. And wherever the Holy Spirit is, there Jesus is. The

Spirit practically reduplicates the Nazarene, bringing Him to every man's door, giving every human being a special Christ, setting over every newborn disciple his own guardian-planet and angel, even the bright morning star. No need is there now of going to Bethlehem or Nazareth, Calvary or Olivet, in order to behold Jesus Christ. The once Man of Nazareth is now the Man of Humanity, and all earth the Holy Land.

Rev. xxii. 16.

Again: the Spirit's advent is better than ^{A Universal} Christ's presence because the Spirit gives us a universal Church instead of a local. A present bodily Jesus involves a geographical Church. But wherever the Holy Spirit is, and He is everywhere, there Jesus Christ is and there Jesus Christ's Church is. The Church of the living God is as universal as the Spirit of Jesus Christ His Son. His temple is neither on Moriah nor on Gerizim, neither in Rome nor in Philadelphia; it is everywhere: and this just because He is Spirit, diffusive as air. Therefore the Spirit knows no topographical or national Church: He knows neither Jew nor Gentile—only the "Parliament of Man." In ^{John iv. 20-24.} ^{1 Cor. xii. 18.} one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free: and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives us one and the same Church, even the Holy Catholic Church throughout all lands and times and names.

Again: the Spirit's advent is better than Christ's ^{A Spiritual} presence because the Spirit gives us a spiritual Saviour. How common the saying: "We are creatures of time and sense"! The tangibles con-

trol us. Our estimates are mainly material, tactical, sensuous. The Roman Catholic Church thoroughly understands this: witness her spectacular ritual: the Pope himself—what is he to the Romanist but Christ's visible Vicar? The sensible is our practical horizon. Suppose then that Christ's risen body were still on earth, and we could behold and touch it, even as it was vouchsafed to Thomas. What would be the result? He would remain to us mainly human. We would know Him chiefly after the flesh. We would loiter and abide in His sweet and beautiful humanities, worshiping in the outer court instead of in the Holy of Holies. With Apostles before His departure we would be asking for throne and diadem. No: the form must vanish before the spirit can be truly seen. Even of saintly kindred and friends it must be acknowledged that we do not truly know them till death strips off the concealing veil of earthly flesh and surroundings, and we behold them in their interior, intrinsic character, their spirit-glory. How much more true of the spiritual, infinite Christ! For physical sight, assuming that it could behold the Infinite, would dwarf that Infinite into the finite. The far-reaching, wide-spreading eye of the spirit fills up the outlines of the infinite Christ more truly than any mere bodily eye ever can. The veil of Christ's flesh then must be rent before the indwelling radiant Godhead can flash forth. In other words: the vast, the largely beautiful, the sublime, can not be seen to advantage near at hand: it needs the relief and outlinings and tintings of distance, even as the Laureate sings of Time:

John xx. 27.

2 Cor. v. 16.

Heb. x. 20.

The past will always win
 A glory from its being far,
 And orb into the perfect star
 We saw not when we moved therein.

In Memoriam,
 xxiv.

It is only when we gaze on the land that is very far off that we can see the King in His beauty. Had Jesus Christ not departed, were He still in bodily presence on earth, even though that body were His risen body, He might say also to us whenever we, Mary-like, knelt to kiss His feet : “Touch Me not, for I have not yet ascended.” We can never truly touch the Risen Lord till we touch Him spiritually. Expedient then was it that the bodily Jesus should depart and the Spirit come : for so we do now behold the Risen Lord in His true Spirit-Glory. And this is the Holy Spirit’s blessed work : He renews the Transfiguration Scene, making it world-wide and immortal, transfiguring Jesus on every mountain-top wherever kneels a spiritual worshiper. Yes, there are two Christs : the Christ according to the flesh, and the Christ according to the Spirit. While Christ’s body is with us we know Him only or mainly according to the flesh. But when He departs and the Spirit comes, we know Him no longer after the flesh : henceforth we know Him after the Spirit. He becomes perpetually transfigured before us : and we behold His glory, a glory as of the Only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. When He ascended and the cloud received Him from out of human sight, we lost Him as Man, or rather we gained Him as God-Man. Even Mary Magdalene may now touch Him.

John xx. 17.

2 Cor v. 17.

John i. 14.

A Spiritual
Character.

Once more: the Spirit's advent is better than Christ's presence because the Spirit gives to us ourselves a spiritual character. He not only spiritualizes Jesus to us; He also spiritualizes ourselves. For other powers Man has besides the intellectual, other sensibilities besides the æsthetic, other affections besides the natural or purely psychical. He has within him a spiritual nature, capable of giant powers and giant experiences. But before this spiritual nature can duly exert its giant powers or duly enter on its giant experiences, it must be touched by something which in its turn is spiritual. No barrier of flesh or sense must be permitted to come between what is spiritual within us and the Holy One of God. Were Jesus still on earth, even though He were the Risen Lord, He would reach in the main only the lower range of our capacities. We would still love Him; but we would love Him in our earthly range, or, to use the words of Augustine, "as a man loves man, as the carnal loves the carnal, not as the spiritual loves true Majesty." But when the bodily Jesus departs and the spiritual Jesus comes, the new Jesus touches the spiritual within us, and keys it to a nobler strain. See, e. g., how His departure and the consequent advent of His Spirit spiritualized His Apostles. How soon their notions of a Jewish Messiah and a worldly kingdom vanished. How weakness grew into strength, ignorance into knowledge, childhood into manhood. How sublime the contrast between the Apostles of the Gospels and the Apostles of the Acts; between the Peter of Caiaphas's

palace and the Peter of Solomon's porch; between the John who would call down fire from Heaven and the John who wrote that God is Love. Thus does the Spirit exalt us. He takes from us our carnal weapons wherein we trusted, and arms us with His own spiritual panoply. He opens us to the accesses of Divinity. Touching us with coals from off the heavenly altar, He ignites our powers and experiences until they glow with the seraphic flame. He exalts and centers and imparadises our affections, quickening within us the Spirit graces, even the Faith which sees 1 Cor. xiii. 13. Isaiah vi. 6. Him Who is invisible, the Hope which expects Him Who is to return, the Love which communes with Him Who Himself is Love. Thus does He not only transfigure Jesus before us, He also transfigures us before Jesus. Verily it was expedient for us that the bodily Jesus should ascend and the Holy Spirit come: for now we have a Spiritual Lord and a Spiritual Church and a Spiritual Character.

Be it for us, then, to live in an ascended estate. For the life of every human being in the proportion that it is a Christian life is a perpetual *Ex-celsior*. In fact, he who has Christ within him has already begun his own ascension. If, then, we have been raised up with Christ, let us seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: for we died, and our life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ our life shall be manifested, then shall we also be manifested with Him in glory.

Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that Collect for Ascension Day. like as we do believe Thy Only-begotten Son our

The Christian
Life a Cease-
less Ascen-
sion.

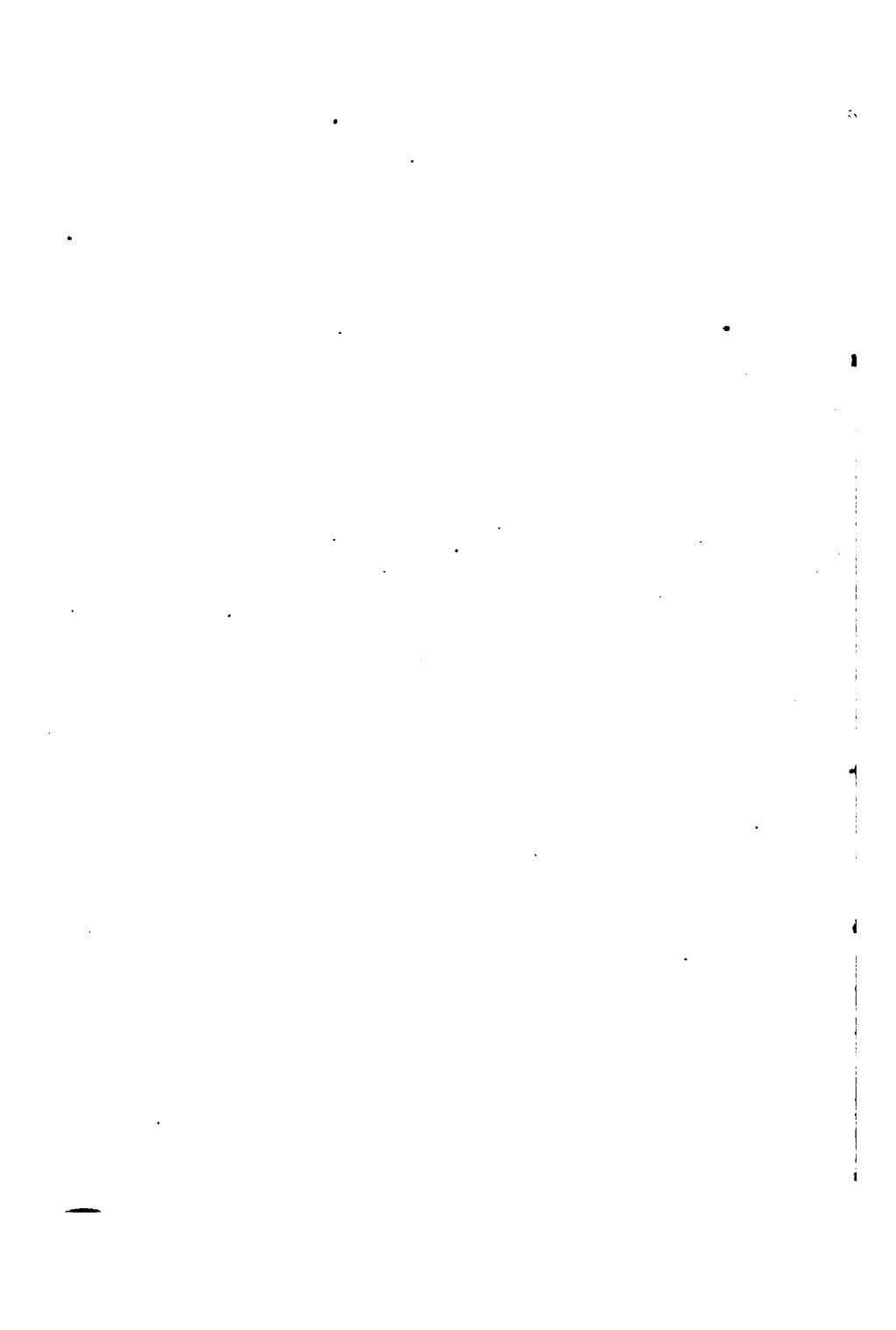
Col. iii. 1-4.

Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the Heavens, so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

EPIPHANIES OF THE FORTY DAYS.

To whom also He shewed Himself alive after His passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES i. 3.



XI.

EPIPHANIES OF THE FORTY DAYS.

WE have now completed our studies in the Summary. Epiphanies of the Forty Days. Let us enumerate them: the Epiphany to Mary Magdalene, to the other Women, to Peter, to the Two, to the Ten, to Thomas, to the Seven, to the Five Hundred, to James, to the Disciples on Olivet. Not that these were the only occasions on which the Risen Lord was seen. But these seem to have been recorded as Specimen Epiphanies. I have alluded more than once to the mysterious character of the Forty Days. Where was the Risen Lord's home during the intervals between His Epiphanies? On earth or in Heaven? What was His employment? The Scripture has not told us; and when the Scripture is silent on such points, it is idle to speculate. Enough that we know that He showed Acts 1. 8. Himself alive after His Passion by many infallible proofs, being seen during forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. Neither can we tell why the Epiphanies of the Risen Lord were limited to forty days. For aught we can see the number might have been

Matt. xvii. 3.
Ex. xxiv. 18.
1 Kings xix. 8.

Mark i. 18.

The Risen
Lord Seen
only by His
Followers.

Acts x. 40, 41.

Luke xvi. 31.

fifty or a hundred as well as forty. Nevertheless it is a significant fact that Moses and Elijah, who had appeared with Him in the Transfiguration Scene, had each of them been in Horeb forty days, and He Himself had been in the wilderness forty days tempted by Satan. The forty days of Lent are probably good, but forty days of Easter are certainly better. Best of all, the Church of the Resurrection can observe each day of the year as her Easter. It is her blessed privilege to have an Epiphany of her Risen Lord every day.

And this suggests the question : Was the Risen Lord ever seen during the Forty Days by any who had not been His followers ? There is no Scriptural evidence that He ever was. Indeed, the Apostle Peter expressly declares that God raised Him up on the third day, and showed Him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses before chosen by God, even to ourselves, who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. And why should the Risen Lord make His Epiphanies to those who had rejected Him in His ministry of love ? Listen to the Master Himself : “If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.” And as it was through the Forty Days, so it is still. But there is this difference : the probability of beholding Him as Risen is vastly less ; if we believe not the Moses and Prophets who foretold Him, and very especially if we believe not the Gospels and Epistles which declare that what Moses and Prophets had foretold has been fulfilled, neither will we be persuaded though

we behold the Risen Lord Himself. In fact, the only Jesus which unbelievers see or can see is the dead Jesus. Their Church, if indeed they have any, is the Church of the Sepulchre. True, they may bring Easter flowers and pay outward homage to an outward resurrection; but there will be no true Resurrection Morn for them until the Day dawn and the Morning Star arise in their own hearts. Before they can see the Risen Lord they must arise out of the sepulchre of their own dead selves. If they would know the power of His Resurrection, they must first know the fellowship of His sufferings and be conformed to the likeness of His death. Good Friday must come before Easter. And, God be praised, Easter will always come after Good Friday. The most gorgeous spectacle which Rome ever witnesses is on the evening of Easter Sunday, when the exterior of its majestic Cathedral is illuminated from base to dome by thousands of golden lamps. When will the world learn that it is not by suspending external lanterns, but by having the Risen Lord within us, that God's true Cathedral, even His Temple of the Soul, can be illuminated?

But although the Risen Lord made no Epiphanies of Himself except to His own followers, yet those Epiphanies were made in such a way as to render the fact of His resurrection indisputable. He demonstrated the materiality of His risen body by many infallible proofs, such as appearing, walking, speaking, touching, eating, etc. If ever there was a historic statement, based on the testimony

2 Peter i. 19.

Phil. iii. 10.

"Many Infallible Proofs."

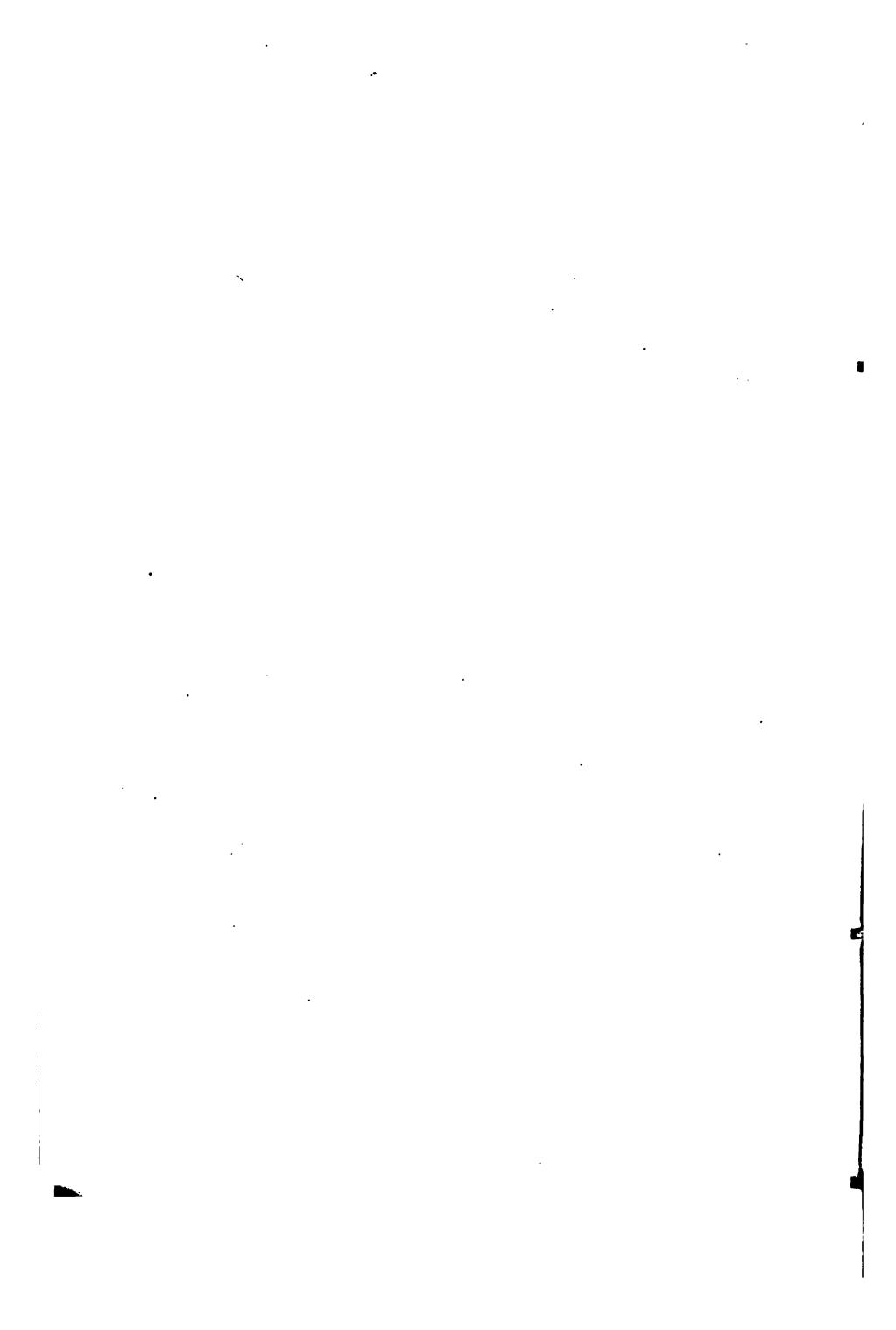
of eye-witnesses, proved, it is this : Jesus Christ has risen from the dead.

The Suborned Report.

Matt. xxviii. 11-15.

And now listen to a most incredible theory. When, on the first Resurrection morn, the Roman guard had rallied from their paralysis of fright, they hastened back to the city, and told the chief priests the marvelous things which had happened. No sooner did the hierarchy hear the startling report than, in spite of its being the Sabbath, they convoked a session of the Sanhedrim. Alas ! for that miserable, conscience-stung body no *sine die* adjournment was now possible. Having hastily consulted, they offered to the guard large money, saying : "Say ye, 'His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were sleeping.' And if this comes to the Governor's ears, we will persuade him and make you secure." This then is the abyss of weakness and infamy into which the sacred representatives of God's ancient, chosen people have sunk in their mad fight against the Divine Son of their own Abraham and David ; resorting to pitiful bribery, and this of foreign, heathen soldiery ; undertaking to overbalance the Resurrection of the Son of God with miserable gold. So the soldiers took the money, and did as they were taught, saying : "His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were sleeping." And this saying was commonly reported among the Jews down to the time that Matthew wrote his Gospel. How unspeakably absurd as a theory in explanation of Joseph's empty tomb ! A drowsy Roman watch (and death was the Roman penalty for sleeping on guard)

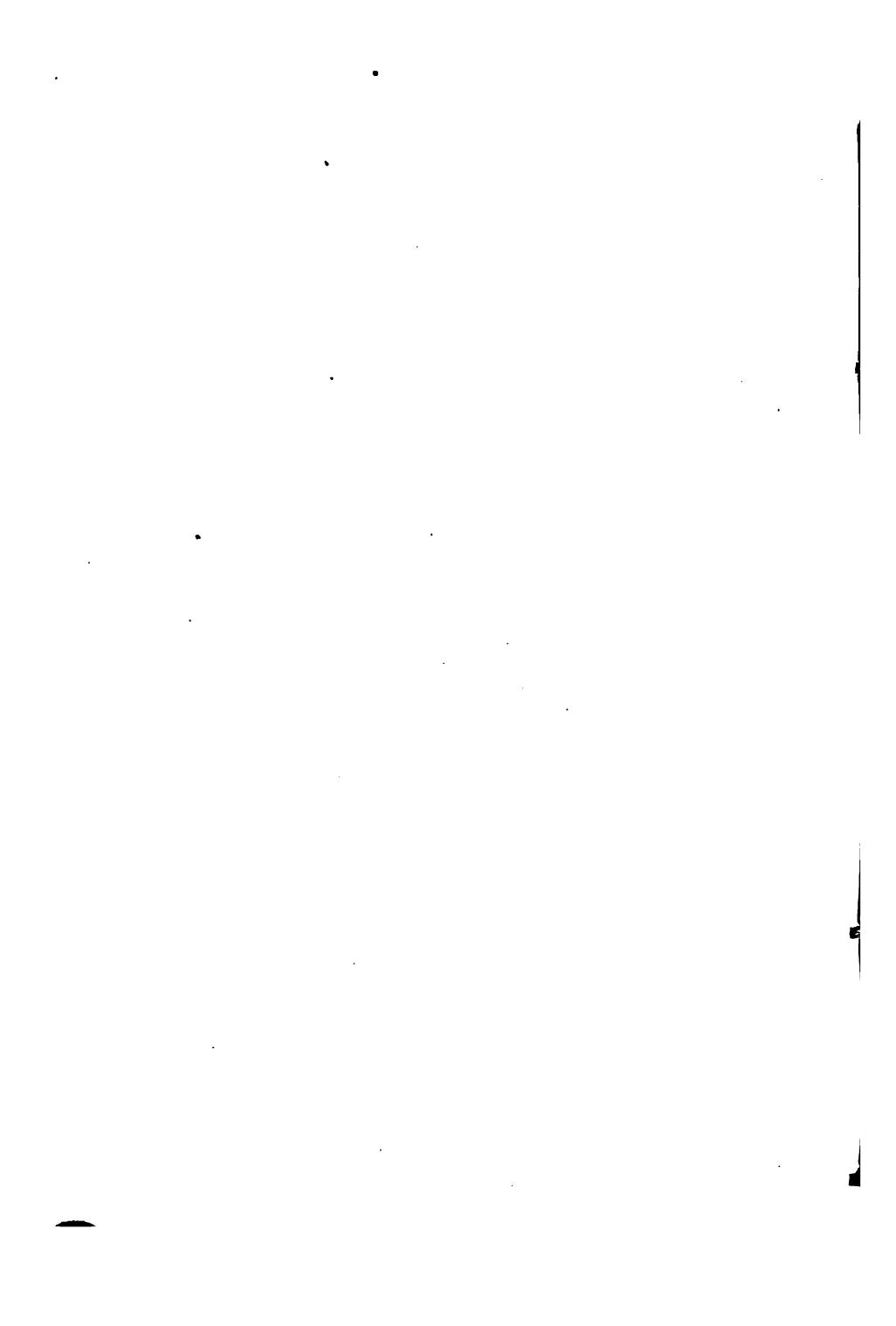
the key to the riddle of Cæsar's broken seal! An apostolic theft of a crucified corpse the secret of Joseph's empty tomb! Verily, whom Jupiter would destroy he first dements. And yet is this story of the soldiers, considered as an explanation of the alleged Resurrection, one whit more absurd than the theories of many among us, even of educated and, if you please, philosophical men? Oh, there is no credulity so credulous as the credulosity of incredulity. Compare this hierarchical story of the rifled Sepulchre with the apostolic story of the Resurrection of Jesus. Which is easier to believe: the Sanhedrim, or Mary Magdalene? Caiaphas, or the Women? Celsus, or Cleopas? Porphyry, or the Ten? Julian the Apostate, or Thomas the Steadfast? Herbert of Cherbury, or the Seven? Voltaire, or Peter? Strauss, or the Five Hundred? Rénan, or Paul? Which is easier to believe: the bought report of a sleepy guard, or the Gospel of the Resurrection? Which will you believe: the story of a murderous Sanhedrim, and go down to the grave stripped of immortality, or the story of saintly Apostles, and soar into the air to meet the returning Nazarene, and so ever be with the Lord?



THE
EPIPHANY TO SAUL OF TARSUS.

Last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out
of due time.

1 CORINTHIANS xv. 8.



XII.

THE EPIPHANY TO SAUL OF TARSUS.

SOME five years after the Ascension of Jesus Christ, a party of travelers were on their way from the city of Jerusalem to the city of Damascus. They were led by one who, although still a comparatively young man, had already made himself the most conspicuous of the foes to the New Religion. A man endowed with splendid natural abilities and a magnificent moral temperament, scrupulously trained in the most illustrious school of his country, absolutely irreproachable in life, Saul of Tarsus confessedly stands in the very foremost rank of earth's great men. But he was a Jew, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee of the strictest sect of the Pharisees; and therefore he felt conscientiously bound to oppose with his utmost power the New Religion as being the most dangerous foe to his own ancestral Faith. Accordingly he had been the most relentless of persecutors, making havoc of the Church of God, imprisoning and beating and punishing oft in every synagogue those who believed, compelling them to blaspheme, entering into private houses

The Conversion of Saul of Tarsus.
Acts ix. 1-31; xxii. 1-21; xxvi. 1-28.

and dragging, binding, and delivering into prisons both men and women, being so exceedingly mad against them that he persecuted them even unto foreign cities, giving his vote against them that they be put to death, standing by and guarding the raiment of those who stoned Stephen. And now, still breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, he goes to the High Priest and asks of him letters to the synagogues of Damascus, that if he should find any who were of this new way of belief, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem, that they might be punished. Having secured the needed authority and commission, he and his fellow persecutors start for Damascus. As they approach the City of Gardens, suddenly a great light from Heaven, above the brightness of the midday sun, shines round about them. So overwhelming is the splendor that they all fall prostrate on the ground. And now a Godlike voice pierces the ear of the chief persecutor, saying in the Hebrew tongue: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? It is hard for thee to kick against the goads." "Who art Thou, Lord?" asks the trembling persecutor. The Godlike voice answers: "I am Jesus the Nazarene, Whom thou persecutest. Arise and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared to thee for this purpose, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things which thou hast seen and of the things in which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn

from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among the sanctified by faith that is in Me." Meantime the men journeying with Saul remain speechless with terror, seeing indeed the light but not perceiving Him Who spoke, hearing His voice but not understanding His words. But although Saul has received his commission as minister and witness to the Gentiles, he still remains bewildered, and asks: "Lord, what shall I do?" And the Lord says to him: "Arise and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." And Saul arises from the earth, and opening his eyes, lo, he sees nothing, being blind by reason of the brightness of the light which had shined round about him. And so the blind persecutor is led as a little child by the hand of his fellow travelers into Damascus. For three days he continues without sight, neither eating nor drinking. Meantime the Lord had appeared to a certain disciple of Damascus, named Ananias, and said to him: "Ananias! Arise and go into the street called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus; for, lo, he prayeth." And Ananias answered: "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how great evils he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem; and he hath authority from the chief priests to bind here all who call on Thy name." But the Lord said to Ananias: "Go, for this man is to Me a chosen vessel, to bear My name before nations and kings and the sons of Israel; for I

Myself will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." And now Ananias obeys, and enters the house of Judas, and puts his hands on the blind persecutor, and says to him : " Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, Who appeared to thee in the way thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayst receive sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Brother Saul, look up !" And there fall off from his eyes as it were scales, and he looks up upon Ananias. And Ananias says to him : " The God of our fathers hath chosen thee to know His will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from His mouth ; for thou shalt be a witness for Him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou ? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on His Name." Nor is he disobedient to the heavenly vision. Immediately he preaches Jesus in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. And all that hear him are amazed, saying : " Is not this he who destroyed in Jerusalem those who called on this Name, and came hither for this purpose, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests ? " But Saul increases the more in strength, and confounds the Jews who dwell at Damascus, proving that Jesus the Nazarene is the very Christ. And so he goes up to Jerusalem and throughout all Judea and among all the Gentiles, proclaiming everywhere the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to wit : that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

Such is the Story of the Conversion of Saul of Tarsus—a Conversion which, be it very particularly noted, was brought about by his vision of the Risen Lord in His Epiphany to him on the way to Damascus. Listen to his own emphatic declaration, in which, after having enumerated various of the Epiphanies of the Forty Days, he adds: “Last of all, as to one born out of due time, He appeared unto me also: for I am the least of the Apostles, and am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God; but by the grace of God I am what I am.” That gracious Epiphany on the way to Damascus was the turning point in the persecutor’s career. Here it was that Jesus Christ seized him, casting down his reasonings, and bringing every thought into blessed and abiding captivity unto His own obedience. Here it was that Saul of the Pharisees became Paul of the Nazarenes. A revolution so radical and so momentous in its bearings on the moral history of mankind demands our very special study. May the Spirit, then, help us as we ponder the following theme: the Conversion of Saul of Tarsus a Testimony to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

That we may conceive the case clearly, let us, first of all, notice the stupendousness of the revolution itself. The Apostle has left on record a memorable statement of the magnitude of the revolution. It is as follows:

If any other man thinketh that he hath ground for confidence in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of

The Epiphany
the Occasion
of Saul’s Con-
version.

¹ Cor. xv. 8-10.

Phil. iii. 12.

² Cor. x. 5.

The Conver-
sion a Stu-
pendous Rev-
olution.

Phil. iii. 4-11.

the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the Church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But whatsoever things were gain to me, those I have counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dross, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, even the righteousness which cometh from God upon faith: that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed unto His death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

Here we see a man of transcendent intellectual qualities and splendid erudition forsaking scribe and rabbi, Gamaliel and Jonathan, and consorting with the illiterate and those whom the world calls foolish: a man of rank and fame and splendid ecclesiastical, political, and literary prospects, turning his back on as brilliant a future as ever beckoned forward a son of ambition, and casting in his fortunes with the obscure and despised and outlawed: a man of intense ancestral pride and conservative instincts giving up a brilliant liturgy and a venerable religion two thousand years old, and adopting a new, apparently anti-Mosaic, self-denying, humbling, hated, scorned, outlawed religion: a man of spotless orthodoxy and faultless morals confessing that in himself is no good thing, and that his only hope of righteousness and eternal life is in a despised, crucified Galilean: in brief, we see a man whose whole theory of life has been so completely revolution-

ized, that whatever things he used to prize, all these he now counts but loss for the sake of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, for Whom he cheerfully suffers the loss of all things, and counts them as refuse, that he may gain Christ and be found in Him, no longer trusting in his own Mosaic, legal righteousness, but henceforth trusting solely in the righteousness which cometh from God through faith in Jesus the Crucified. Here is a stupendous revolution of character. How shall we account for it? It is a fair question to ask. Every effect, we are accustomed to say, must have a cause. Here is a colossal effect; what caused it? How shall we account for the transformation of Saul the Persecutor into Paul the Missionary?

Various answers have been given. They may all be reduced to three.

And, first, Paul's assertion that he had seen the Risen Lord was a falsehood. This was the position taken by the Deists of the last century.

What motive, then, I ask in reply, could Paul have for asserting such a falsehood? For even men of the feeblest intellects do not act without motives. But here is a man of confessedly powerful, broad, keen, piercing intellect, persisting for thirty years in maintaining what he knew all the time to be an absolute lie. What motive, then, could he have for maintaining a lie so gigantic and sacrilegious and prolonged? Was it hope of advancement? But to confess the Nazarene was in those days the surest way to be defeated in every worldly ambition. Was it love of rank, or wealth,

or power, or ease ? But to be a follower of the Galilean was to court, and not only to court but to make morally certain, toil, and poverty, and hate, and scorn, and persecution, and death. Listen to a catalogue of some of the sufferings which befell Paul because of his renunciation of Judaism and his devotion to the Crucified, Risen Jesus :

2 Cor. xi. 28-27.

From the Jews five times received he forty stripes save one ; thrice was he beaten with rods ; once was he stoned ; thrice suffered he shipwreck ; a night and a day was he in the deep ; in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils from robbers, in perils from his own countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness, in prisons often ; made as the filth of the earth and the off-scouring of all things—a spectacle both to angels and to men : always being delivered up to death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in his mortal flesh. Thus on this theory of imposture we see a man of marvelous mental breadth and marvelous moral height—a man gifted with

1 Cor. iv. 9-18.

2 Cor. iv. 10, 11.

*In Memoriam,
civili.*

Seraphic intellect and force
To seize and throw the doubts of man :
Impassioned logic, which outran
The hearer in its fiery course :

High nature amorous of the good,
But touched with no ascetic gloom :
And passion pure in snowy bloom
Through all the years of April blood—

we see this magnificent man deliberately inventing a useless, monstrous lie, and persistently adhering to it for a quarter of a century; and this too amid fiery persecutions, daily conscious that his only reward for this gigantic lie was pauperism, disgrace, torture, martyrdom, everlasting damnation. Let him believe it who can.

Secondly: Paul's assertion that he had seen the Risen Lord was an hallucination. This is a favorite position of the modern philosophical skeptic. Driven from the theory of imposture by its unspeakable absurdity, the modern rationalist concedes that Paul really believed that the Lord had appeared to him; but the belief was the result of a delusion. The argument is put somewhat after this fashion: "Paul was a man of nervous, excitable organization: he was conscientious to the last degree: his very conscientiousness made him an intense persecutor of the Christians: coming into contact with these Christians, he became familiar with their arguments, their self-sacrificing mode of life, their patient behavior under persecution: such unusual deportment made a profound impression on his susceptible nature: doubts began to arise whether he might not be in the wrong and they in the right, and that the crucified Nazarene Whom they adored might not after all be the promised Messiah: being a Pharisee, he would have no difficulty with the doctrine of the Resurrection: thus reasoning, he began to be agitated by the thrilling question—May not Jesus really have risen? the more he pondered it, the more it distressed him: the very conscientiousness which

Nor an Hallucination:

had made him such a zealous persecutor began to torture him with the thought that he had been a persecutor at all: thus the very excess of his persecuting zeal paved the way for a sudden and extraordinary revulsion of feeling: that revulsion took place when journeying to Damascus on an errand of persecution he was at the same time torn with the thought that he might be fighting against God: agonized by the possibility, his scrupulous, impetuous nature was suddenly overmastered: in his inflamed, frenzied imagination he fancied he saw in the heavens the form of the Risen Jesus and heard from His mouth words of tender rebuke and august commission." Such is the latest form of the skeptical explanations of Paul's assertion that he had seen the Risen Lord. Elaborately ingenious it is: but the very elaborateness of its ingenuity makes it incredible.

For, survey the character of the Apostle Paul. Susceptible, imaginative, impetuous he certainly was: it was the very vehemence of his temperament which was the secret of his wonderful career. Yet the man never lived who had his faculties more completely under control or used them with more sagacity than this same vehement Paul. Enthusiast though he was, he was the diametric opposite to the fanatic or visionary. Is looseness of reasoning or wildness of statement a mark of the fanatic? The man never lived who reasoned more accurately or syllogistically than this same Paul: witness his letters to the Romans and the Galatians. Is Utopian dreaming a mark of the vision-

ary? The man never lived who took broader, deeper, more sensible views of the problems of society or discussed with finer acumen questions of practical casuistry than this same Paul: witness his exposition of the great Law of Edification as set forth in his Epistle to the Romans, chapters xii.-xv., or his discussion of cases of conscience as unfolded in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, chapters vi.-xiv. Are impatience, brusqueness, intolerance, obstinacy, recklessness marks of the fanatic? The man never lived who was the more absolute antithesis to all this than this same Paul: witness his gentleness, patience, tolerance, magnanimity, humility, dignity, courtesy, deference to authority, repudiation of outward form, self-forgetfulness in his devotion to others: and all this vehemence and gentleness, firmness and tolerance, dignity and modesty, self-respect and self-surrender, dauntlessness and sweetness in beautiful, marvelous equipoise. In brief: Is the spirit of destructiveness the mark of the fanatic? The man never lived who was more absolutely a constructor of society than this same Paul: witness the quickening, broadening, strengthening, purifying, uplifting, transfiguring influence of his writings and character on succeeding ages to this day. Next his Divine Master Himself, Paul the Apostle is the most controlling force of Christendom:

Becoming, when the time had birth,
A lever to uplift the earth
And roll it in another course.

In Memoriam,
xxii.

And yet this man, endowed with a nature which

In Memoriam,
cxl.

Large elements in order brought,
And tracts of calm from tempest made,
And world-wide fluctuation sway'd
In vassal tides that follow'd thought—

this man, we are told, was a wild visionary, suddenly reversing his whole theory and mode of life under impulse of a heated imagination, swept along through thirty years of a magnificent intellectual and moral career and through untold sufferings by a mere hallucination. All I have to say in reply to a supposition so monstrous is this: If hallucination is capable of producing such characters as Saint Paul, would God all men were flighty, all earth a Bedlam!

But a Fact.

Thirdly: Paul's assertion that he had seen the Risen Lord was a fact; the appearance on the way to Damascus was a veritable Epiphany. This is the position of the Christian Church.

Acts xxvi. 16-18.

1 Cor. ix. 1.

For that Epiphany explains everything. It explains his sudden, radical revolution of character; the Risen Lord had appeared to him and beckoned him up into a diviner life, even the Resurrection estate. That Epiphany explains his cosmopolitan ministration; the Risen Lord had appeared to him, saying: "Arise, and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared to thee for this purpose, to appoint thee a minister and a witness to the Gentiles, to whom I now send thee." That Epiphany explains his claim to be an Apostle, and this in spite of the fact that he was not one of the original Twelve and had never been elected by human hands: "Am I not an Apostle? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?"

That Epiphany explains his passionate sense of fellowship and even identification with the Slain and Risen Lord: "I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me." Gal. ii. 20.

That Epiphany explains his career of self-sacrifice: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body." That Epiphany explains his being persecuted in turn by those who had been his fellow persecutors; for so long as he proclaimed only a crucified, dead, entombed Jesus, the Jews would never have laid hands on him; but he also proclaimed a risen, living, triumphant Jesus, Whom he testified he had personally seen years after His crucifixion and burial; and therefore the very Sanhedrim who had furnished him letters of authority to persecute the Christians turned against him the whole enginery of their might and hate, hunting him to the martyr's grave. In brief: that Epiphany explains everything from the moment when he, a young man named Saul, was dazed by the splendor above the brightness of the sun, to the moment when he, Paul the aged and the prisoner of Jesus Christ, serenely and for Jesus' sake laid bare his neck for the headsman's axe. Deny that Epiphany, and you have in the career of Paul the most inexplicable of character-problems. Admit that Epiphany explains his career of self-sacrifice: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body." 2 Cor. iv. 5.

That Epiphany explains his being persecuted in turn by those who had been his fellow persecutors; for so long as he proclaimed only a crucified, dead, entombed Jesus, the Jews would never have laid hands on him; but he also proclaimed a risen, living, triumphant Jesus, Whom he testified he had personally seen years after His crucifixion and burial; and therefore the very Sanhedrim who had furnished him letters of authority to persecute the Christians turned against him the whole enginery of their might and hate, hunting him to the martyr's grave. In brief: that Epiphany explains everything from the moment when he, a young man named Saul, was dazed by the splendor above the brightness of the sun, to the moment when he, Paul the aged and the prisoner of Jesus Christ, serenely and for Jesus' sake laid bare his neck for the headsman's axe. Deny that Epiphany, and you have in the career of Paul the most inexplicable of character-problems. Admit that Epiphany explains his career of self-sacrifice: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body." 2 Cor. iv. 10.

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That Epiphany explains his being persecuted in turn by those who had been his fellow persecutors; for so long as he proclaimed only a crucified, dead, entombed Jesus, the Jews would never have laid hands on him; but he also proclaimed a risen, living, triumphant Jesus, Whom he testified he had personally seen years after His crucifixion and burial; and therefore the very Sanhedrim who had furnished him letters of authority to persecute the Christians turned against him the whole enginery of their might and hate, hunting him to the martyr's grave. In brief: that Epiphany explains everything from the moment when he, a young man named Saul, was dazed by the splendor above the brightness of the sun, to the moment when he, Paul the aged and the prisoner of Jesus Christ, serenely and for Jesus' sake laid bare his neck for the headsman's axe. Deny that Epiphany, and you have in the career of Paul the most inexplicable of character-problems. Admit that Epiphany explains his career of self-sacrifice: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body." Philemon 9.

any, and you have the most inexplicable of character-problems made clear as the sunlight. In other words: the story of Paul is a dazzling demonstration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Collect for St.
Paul's Day.

O God, Who, through the preaching of the blessed Apostle Saint Paul, hast caused the light of the Gospel to shine throughout the world: Grant, we beseech Thee, that we, having his wonderful conversion in remembrance, may show forth our thankfulness unto Thee for the same, by following the holy doctrine which he taught: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

INDIRECT TESTIMONIES
TO THE
RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us
again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ
from the dead.

1 PETER, i. 3.



XIII.

INDIRECT TESTIMONIES TO THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

IN drawing this series of meditations to a close, it will be appropriate and profitable for us to ponder, first of all, some of the indirect or incidental testimonies to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ : that is to say, testimonies which are not expressly set forth as such in the Sacred Chronicles.

And, first : the Testimony of the Pentecostal bravery. We take two scenes.

Night has fallen on the city of the Great King. Night also has fallen on the hearts of a little group of disciples. They have left the Paschal room, and, wending their way through the narrow streets and out the city gate, and crossing the Kedron, they enter the Garden of Olives. In its solemn shadows kneels and prays the Divine Son of Man, and the fierceness of His anguiss his such that it forces out sweat as great drops of blood. And now the supreme moment has come. "Rise," exclaims the Man of Sorrows to His drowsy disciples, "Let us be going ; behold he that betrayeth Me is at hand." While He is yet speaking,

Indirect Testimonies to Christ's Resurrection.

Testimony of Pentecostal Bravery.

Matt. xxvi. 80-75.

lo, the tramp of advancing soldiery is heard, and the gleam of torch and sword fitfully lights up the solemn recesses of the olive grove. A moment later, and Judas Iscariot steps forward, and presses with accursed lips the cheek of the Divine Man. The soldiers understand the signal, and advancing, seize the unresisting victim and march Him to Jerusalem for trial. A horrible surmise seizes the Apostolic Band. Can it be that they have been mistaken; that this beloved Teacher and Friend of theirs is not what He has seemed to be; that after all He is only a man like themselves, destined like them to death-throe and tomb? The surmise so sudden, so terrible, overpowers them. A common panic seizes them. Like a herd of startled deer, they forsake Him and fly. And now Jesus is swiftly arraigned and tried and convicted and sentenced; and not one of His Apostles lifts his voice in His behalf: alas, one of them, and that the foremost, even he who had pronounced the adoring Confession at Cæsarea Philippi, and whom the Master had invested with the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, does lift up his voice, but it is only to deny with oaths and imprecations that he knew the Galilean. Jesus is scourged and buffeted and mocked and thorn-crowned and led to Calvary and nailed and uplifted and jeered at: and not one of His Apostles lifts up his voice in protest. Jesus is taken down from the Cross and borne to the tomb: and now His disciples gather round Him, but it is only to sit by His sepulchre and weep. And well they may: for in that sepulchre are contained the Naz-

arene and the Nazarene's religion and kingdom. And so the curtain drops on sepulchred hopes, even on a dismayed, despairing, wailing church.

Fifty days glide by. The curtain rises, and, ^{Acts ii.} lo ! how changed the scene. Who is this man who, standing up with the Ten in the city of the Nazarene's defeat and execution and entombment, and, boldly facing the vast multitudes gathered to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, dares charge home on his listeners the murder of the Son of God ? It is the cowering, threefold denier of Caiaphas's judgment hall. Who are these Eleven ^{Acts iv, v.} who, a few days later, are arrested and tried and scourged, and go out from the presence of the Council rejoicing that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name, and daily in the temple and in houses, and this in defiance of the civil prohibition, cease not to proclaim that the prisoner of Caiaphas and the victim of Pilate and the corpse of Joseph's tomb is the Risen Christ and Son of God ? They are the panic-stricken fugitives of Gethsemane, the trembling, far-off followers to Calvary. And so the curtain again falls ; but now it falls on a courageous, exultant, defiant Church.

And now I have a question to ask : it is this : How will you explain this marvelous change ? To account for phenomena is the highest function of reason. Here is a most remarkable phenomenon : When the curtain first fell, it fell on a Church in tears ; when the curtain rose, it rose on a Church in smiles. How do you account for this wondrous transformation ? Surely no question could be

more philosophical or pertinent. An effect so profound must have had a cause, and an adequate cause. What was that adequate cause? What has occurred within these fifty days to change these affrighted fugitives of Gethsemane into the intrepid champions of the Crucified Nazarene, these despairing wailers by Jesus' tomb into the exultant evangelists of Jesus' Glory, the Church of the Requiem into the Church of the Hosanna?

I will tell you what has occurred: Jesus Christ has risen from the dead. He has appeared to these Apostles, being seen by them during forty days. He has walked with them and communed with them and eaten before them. He has allowed them to examine His nailed hands and feet and His pierced side. He has reinstated Peter in his forfeited Apostleship. He has augustly declared that all authority had been given Him in Heaven and on earth. He has issued His majestic Commission to go into all the world and disciple every nation unto Himself. He has given the August Promise of His Perpetual Presence. He has shown Himself alive to them by many infallible proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking to them of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. He has ascended visibly before them, and has promised a descent as visible.

Acts i. 3.

Luke xxiv. 18-43.

John xxi. 15-17.

Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

Acts i. 3.

Acts i. 9-11.

Acts ii. 38.

From His regal seat at the Father's right hand He has poured down on them wondrous gifts of the Holy Ghost. Ay, the dead Lord is alive again: the buried Jesus of earth is the Risen Christ of the Heavens. And this accounts for the marvelous revulsion in the feelings of the

Apostles. This accounts for their sudden access of joy and bravery. They have been begotten again unto a living hope through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The Epiphanies of the Risen Lord are the secret of the Pentecostal, triumphant Church.

1 Peter 1. 3.

Again : the change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday is a Testimony to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

Testimony of Sunday.

How was this tremendous change brought about ? Tremendous, I say, for, considering the circumstances of the case, the change was nothing less than stupendous. When we remember that the Seventh Day had received the august sanction of the Creator's own example in Eden from the very beginning ; that the Commandment to keep the Sabbath Day holy, proclaimed as it had been amid the trumpet-clangs and lightnings and quakings and Divinely ordained barricades of Sinai, was distinctly based on the Creator's own example in Eden ; that the keeping the Seventh Day had been distinctly set forth as one of the badges of the Jewish nationality ; that the keeping the Seventh Day had been promised the most glorious rewards, and that the breaking the Seventh Day had been threatened with the direst penalties, even death itself ; that for more than fifteen hundred years the Hebrew people, with here and there an exception in times of immense apostasy, had scrupulously observed the Seventh Day as the

Gen. ii. 1-8.

Ex. xx. 8-11.

Ex. xxxi. 16, 17.

Isaiah lviii. 13, 14.

Ex. xxxi. 14, 15.

* The author takes the liberty of transferring here a paragraph from his Lecture on the "Genesis of the Sabbath" in his volume entitled "The Creative Week," pp. 269-272.

Divinely appointed Sabbath ; that this observance had never been so scrupulous as in the days of Jesus Christ Himself, it being, in fact, the very point at which He came into oftenest and sharpest collision with His adversaries, and which was one of the precipitating causes of His premature death ; that the saintly women who had bravely stood by the Cross, and were yearning to minister to their dead Lord the last sepulchral honors, yet scrupulously refrained from doing so because the Seventh Day was over the land ; that the Apostles were Jews, and as such shared in the intense conservatism and traditionalism of their race ; that there is no record of any Divine command to substitute the First Day for the Seventh—when we remember all this, we are forced to admit that the change from Saturday to Sunday was, under the circumstances, nothing less than a tremendous revolution. But revolutions do not take place without causes. How, then, will you account for this stupendous revolution ? It is a fair question for the philosophical historian to ask. Here is a venerable, sacred Institution—hallowed by the Creator's own example in Eden, solemnly enjoined amid the thunders of Sinai, distinctly set apart as one of the chief signs that Israel was God's chosen, covenanted People, majestically buttressed by loftiest promises in case of observance and by direst threats in case of non-observance, freighted with the solemn weight of fifteen centuries of sacred associations and scrupulous observance—suddenly falling into disuse, and presently supplanted by another Day, which to this Year of

Luke xxiii. 55.
56; xxiv. 1.

Grace has held its own amid the throes of eighteen centuries. How will you account for this tremendous revolution? It is, I repeat, a fair question for the philosophical historian to ask. And the philosophical historian knows the answer. Jesus the Nazarene has been crucified. All through the Seventh Day or Hebrew Sabbath He has lain in Joseph's tomb. In that tomb, amid solitude and darkness and grave-clothes, He has grappled in mortal duel with the King of Death, and has thrown him and shivered his scepter. At the close of that awful Sabbath, as it begins to dawn toward the First Day of the Week, He rises triumphant from the dead. And, by and in the very fact of this triumphant rising, He henceforth and for evermore emblazons the First Day of the Week as His own royal, supernal Day, even Time's first true Sabbath. Ah! the Primitive Church needed no command. Conscious of their need of a Sabbath, and aware that the Hebrew Seventh Day, like the other institutions of the Sinaitic economy, had shared Christ's Sepulchre but not Christ's Resurrection, it was enough for them and it is enough for us that He Who Himself was the Lord of the Sabbath and greater than Sinai and Eden had risen on Sunday. Ay, Saturday was the Sabbath of a rejected, executed, entombed Jesus: Sunday was the Sabbath of a Risen, Exalted, Triumphant Christ. God grant that it may be for us all evermore to be in the Lord's own Spirit on the Lord's own Day.

Again: the Apostolic mode of conceiving Bap- Testimony of
Baptism.

Matt. xxviii. 1.

Rev. i. 10.

tism is a Testimony to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Apostolic mode, I say: for it is a telling circumstance that after the Lord had died and risen the Apostles discovered in baptism a new meaning, and accordingly spoke of it in new phraseology. Before the Lord's Resurrection, baptism, as administered by John and even by the Lord's own disciples, for Jesus Himself baptized not, was only a symbol of repentance: that is to say, of penitence and change of moral habit: neither the Forerunner nor the Fulfiller spoke of baptism as symbolizing burial and resurrection: they only spoke of it as symbolizing penitence, confession, moral amendment, washing away of sins. But after the Lord's Resurrection the Apostles discovered in Baptism a fresh and blessed meaning, even this: a symbol of the death by which they had been reconciled to God and also of the risen life by which they were being saved. Henceforth Baptism stood before them as the symbol of the great Death and the great Life. Henceforth that blessed conception tinged all their phraseology when speaking of Baptism. Listen to the Paul who had been converted to the Risen Jesus by the Epiphany of Him on the way to Damascus: "Know ye not that all we who were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death: we were therefore buried with Him through baptism into His death: that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (i. e., His resurrection-estate): for if (in baptism)

John iv. 2.

Rom. vi. 3-5

we have become united to the likeness of His death, we shall also (in baptism) be united to the likeness of His resurrection : buried with Him in baptism, wherein also we were raised up with Him through faith in the working of God Who raised Him from the dead." Why, asks the same Apostle, were the Corinthian Christians baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all and if Christ Himself had not risen ? Nay more : Why had Jesus Christ Himself been baptized ? Surely He had no sins to be washed away : He had no need of repentance. Why then did He submit Himself to baptism ? Was it not that He might at the very threshold of His public ministry foreshadow His own destiny ? Ay, the foundations of the Apostolic Creed, to wit : "Christ died for our sins and was buried and rose on the third day :" were symbolically laid in Jordan's bed at the moment our Divine Representative sank beneath its ripples and rose again. As our baptism is historic, commemorating a buried and risen Saviour, so the Saviour's baptism was prophetic, foretelling His own burial and resurrection. And so Jesus Christ in the very act of being baptized exhibited Himself as the first-fruits, the pledge-sheaf of the harvest-Church of the Resurrection. How eloquent then that ancient scene of the Jordan ! How it teems with holy preludes of Entombment and Ascension ! How it transfigures that pre-resurrection baptism of prophecy into the post-resurrection baptism of fulfillment ! What new, vast, august meaning it puts into those meek words : "Suffer it to be so now ; Matt. iii. 15.

Col. ii. 12.

1 Cor. xv. 29.

1 Cor. xv. 1-4.

1 Cor. xv. 20-22.

for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness!"

Testimony of
the Holy
Communion.

Again: the Apostolic mode of conceiving the Holy Communion is a Testimony to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1 Cor. xi. 28.

What though St. Paul declares that as often as we eat the Bread and drink the Cup we show forth the Lord's death till He come? Vain that broken body, vain that shed blood, unless the Lord Himself is alive again. The Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ is really the Communion with the Risen, Living Christ. The Lord in spreading the table of His dying love did not mean that we should kneel before that table as before a Reliquary. The Holy Communion is not a mortuary communion with the dead Lord's bones. The Holy Communion is the blissful communion with the Living One Who indeed was dead, and, lo, He is alive for evermore. On the very occasion when the Lord appointed the Sacred Feast

Rev. i. 18.

He said: "Verily I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom." The Holy Communion looks forward as well as backward: it is a prophecy of the Return as well as a memento of the Departure. Accordingly, when the Lord had risen from the dead and the Pentecostal Spirit was poured out and thousands were converted to the New Faith, the sorrowful Feast of the dying Jesus became the exultant Feast of the Risen Christ; they attended daily with one accord in the temple, and broke bread from house to house, eating their food with

Acts ii. 46.

gladness and singleness of heart, and praising God. When Paul arrived at Troas, and the disciples came together to break bread, it was not on a Friday to partake of a funeral meal, but on a Sunday to enjoy a Resurrection banquet. But had the early church really believed that the Lord was not risen and that the great stone was still rolled up against the door of His sepulchre, they might indeed have still observed the Holy Communion: but it would have been a superstitious, sickly communion with a sepulchral ghost, not a rapturous communion with the living, triumphant Lord.

Again: the Apostolic expectation of the Lord's Return is a Testimony to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The night before His death He said distinctly to His troubled disciples: "I go to prepare a place for you: and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself: that where I am, there ye may be also." That blessed promise was solemnly repeated by the shining Two on the Mount of Ascension: "This same Jesus, Who hath been taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven." What though their dear Lord has just been parted from them? They believed the angel's words, and therefore they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, praising and blessing God. What though fiery persecutions afterward befell them? The blessed promise that they should see their ascended Lord again made them triumphant over every woe. In fact, this great Expectation imbues the Apostolic literature

Acts xx. 7.

Testimony of
the Great
Hope.

John xiv. 2, 8.

Acts i. 11.

Luke xxiv. 52.

with a heavenly hue, brilliantly tinging discourse and epistle. But had the Lord not risen, had the early church supposed that He was still lying in His tomb, there never would have been that constant and joyous looking for the blessed Hope, even the glorious Epiphany of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Titus ii. 18.

Testimony of
Christian
Experience.

Luke xxiv. 48.

Again: Christian Experience is a Testimony to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

“Ye are witnesses of these things,” said the Risen Lord in His final interview with His disciples. The declaration is so profound that we must descend on it.

At the outset, then, let it be emphatically stated that Christianity is a series of physical facts as well as a series of moral truths. Strictly speaking, its truths grow out of its facts. Take away the facts in our Lord’s personal career, and you take away the foundation-stones of Christian Doctrine. You cannot have a personal, vital, living Christianity without first having an historical Jesus. No wonder then that the Risen Lord, ere He ascended, twice declared to His disciples that they were to be His witnesses. And His declaration is frequently and emphatically repeated alike in discourses and epistles by His Apostles. Nothing can exceed the emphasis with which the Apostles declare that they have been eye-witnesses of the great facts in the Nazarene’s career. And in thus insisting on the importance of their own personal testimony they did tribute to human reason. For Christianity appeals to the rational part of our nature not less than to the emotional, and

Luke xxiv. 48.

Acts i. 8.

makes no demands on us which it does not propose to fortify by competent testimony.

But these apostolic witnesses of the bodily Jesus were mortal like ourselves. One after another of them sealed his testimony with his own life-blood. Did then the testimony to the historic career of the Nazarene end with the death of those who had been the companions of the Lord Jesus from His baptism by John to His ascension in the clouds of heaven? Have there been no witnesses of the personal Jesus since the day when the Beloved Disciple in a ripe old age wrote of Him as One Whom he had heard and gazed upon and handled? Are there no witnesses of the personal Jesus to-day? Thank God, there are: the Church of the living God is still a witness of Jesus Christ His Son.

Acts 1: 21, 22.

John 1: 1-8.

And to prove this I shall resort to no argument except such as is furnished by personal experience. Tell me then, O Christian, have you never come into personal relations with Jesus Christ? Have you never been in His company? Have you never heard His voice? Have you never seen His form? Have you never felt His touch? Have you never been crucified with Him? Have you never risen with Him? Have you never soared with Him? Do you not know as absolutely as you can know anything on earth that the Son of God did live in this world and did die, and did rise again and is alive to-day? Have you no spiritual sense, keener and more trusty than any bodily sense, by which you have in very truth touched the crucified and Risen Lord?

Recall the hours—it may be—weeks and months of spiritual distress before you saw Him and believed. How you groaned beneath the load of fell guiltiness! And when at length the mighty burden rolled off, was it not, as in the case of Bunyan's Pilgrim, at sight of the Cross? And as Faith discerned the dying Saviour, was there no spiritual crucifixion within which miniatured and so proved to you the bodily crucifixion without? Heard you not also the sneers which cold-blooded indifference and jeering infidelity flung against your dying Lord? Felt you not the nails piercing your hands and your feet? And when at length the long dark night was over, and the first Lord's Day of Peace began to dawn on your aching spirit, heard you no voice speaking to you, calling you by name, and answered you not—“Rabboni! Master”! And as the hours glided by, and He expounded to you in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself, did not your heart burn within you as He talked with you by the way? And then did you not say to all around: “The Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared to me”? Tell me, Christian, are you not a witness of these things?

John xx. 16.

Luke xxiv. 27-32.

Luke xxiv. 34.

And now suppose some great champion of infidelity should seek to undermine your faith in the New Testament story of Jesus Christ. If your faith be only the assent of intellect, I grant that he may make swift work with you. But if you stand on the high vantage ground of a personal Christian experience, and can keep your eye fixed on the Risen Lord as One Whom you had heard and seen and felt in your own soul, I will stand

voucher for your steadfastness. I think he might as well undertake to dislodge the Rock of Ages. What! will you deny the testimony of your own experience and consciousness? Will you deny the existence of One with Whose sufferings you have had fellowship, to the likeness of Whose death you have been conformed, the power of Whose resurrection you have felt? Ah, it is when the Christian allows the vision of the Jesus he has once seen to fade from his memory that faith gives way to doubt and doubt to apostasy. But let him always grasp the hand and lean on the bosom of the personal Jesus, and neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing shall be able to make him abate one jot or tittle of his certainty as an eye-witness of the crucified and risen Lord. He has a demonstration stronger than any bodily vision or sense evidence: it is experience. He that believeth in the Son of God hath the witness in himself. His faith depends not on tradition, or scholarship, or authority, or deliverances by his pastor. He has a demonstration independent of what man can give or take away: it is his own moral history. He has experienced Jesus Christ in his own moral nature. He knows Whom he has believed, and is persuaded that He is able to keep that which he has committed to Him against that Day. In the depths of his own personal experience he has witnessed, so to speak, the birth and life and passion and death and resurrection of the Son of God. He illustrates in

¹ John v. 10.

² Tim. i. 12.

Phil. iii. 10.

Rom. viii. 38.

John xx. 29.

his own experience the Beatitude of the Risen Lord : " Thomas, because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed : Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed." God grant that the profound phrase, " Experienced religion," may never die out of the dialect of the Church !

This then is our argument : Had Jesus Christ never risen from the dead, were He still lying in Joseph's tomb, did He not now enter into living, personal, blessed communion with His people, there could have been no such thing as Christian experience.

Testimony of
Christian
Character.

Once more : Christian Character is a Testimony to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. For the Church is not only a witness of Him ; the Church is also a witness for Him, and this for the reason that she has been a witness of Him.

Men do not act without motives. When therefore we see a man whose course of moral conduct is entirely changed, so that he is now swayed by principles precisely the opposite to those by which he once was swayed, we may be sure that some new force has been brought to bear on his moral nature. Especially is this true when this change of conduct involves great self-denial. And when we observe this change we instinctively look for some force adequate to produce it. Take now the case of a man who has really become a follower of Jesus Christ. Suppose, e. g., he had been an abandoned profligate, trampling on every moral law, mentioning the Name that is above every name only to profane it : and now you find him, not in the haunts of dissipation, but in the

prayer room: what has wrought this mighty change? Or suppose he had been a complacent, sneering skeptic, without one conscious need of Him Who is the Saviour of sinners: but now he is completely revolutionized; he declares that every doubt is gone, that he knows Whom he has believed, that his blessed comfort is that he leans on the arm of the Friend of Sinners, that his great joy is that he is permitted to join in bearing His train as He strides on in His majesty: what has swept this tide of a new creation over this man? Oh, it is no philosopher's abstraction, no poet's dream, no mythical hero, which has reversed the current of these men's affections and conduct it is the loving, adoring recognition of a living, personal Being, Whose eye is upon them, Whose love subdues them, Whose will is their law, Whose smile is their exceeding great reward. That Being they have seen. They have felt His superhuman power in reorganizing their moral natures. They have been in company with Him and leaned upon His breast. And thus in virtue of their having been witnesses of Him they become witnesses for Him. I grant indeed that if this change of moral purpose and habit involved no self-denial, there might be reason for attaching little weight to the testimony furnished by the change. But when a wicked man becomes a Christian man, he undergoes a sort of spiritual death. There is a painful crucifixion of the inner life. There are the convulsive throes of dying sin. It costs a terrible struggle for the profligate to dash away his cup; for the Pharisee to give up

his self-righteousness ; for the prisoner of Satan to burst his shackles. And when we see a man actually doing this—actually denying himself and taking up his cross daily and following Jesus, and this solely for Jesus' sake—we have in the self-denying conduct of this Christian man a touching as well as convincing testimony to the existence and power of that personal Jesus Whom he thus struggles to follow and glorify. And in fact this testimony which comes through personal experience of Christ's life, passion, and resurrection is the testimony which has supplied the Church with her martyrs. Men will not die for what they regard as a mere abstraction : it is only when a belief is vitalized by its flowing out of a personal being that men will die for it. And it is a significant fact that the original Greek for witness is *μάρτυς*, i. e., *martyr*, and indeed it is sometimes so translated. Thus Paul in his defense before the mob at Jerusalem speaks of the blood of Stephen as the blood of Christ's martyr, witness. St. John, carried away in the spirit into the wilderness, declares he saw the Woman in purple and scarlet drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs or witnesses of Jesus. And the Lord Jesus Himself, in His Letter to the Angel of the Church in Pergamos, speaks of Antipas, who had been slain, as His faithful martyr, witness. Yes, he who has really been a witness of Jesus Christ—who has really in his own personal experience witnessed the passion and resurrection of the Son of God—is ready to be a martyr for Him : and this is wit-

Acts xxii. 20.

Rev. xvii. 3-6.

Rev. ii. 18.

nessing to Jesus Christ indeed. . God grant that we too, like Antipas, may be faithful unto death, and so with him receive the Crown of Life.

Observe now that the testimony which is furnished by change of conduct is stronger than any other. It is the testimony, not of the tongue, but of the life; not of creed, but of deed. And were I seeking to convince a skeptic that there has really lived and died and risen again such a Person as the New Testament describes under the name of Jesus the Nazarene, I would ply him with arguments stronger than those which have been furnished by the sanctified learning and genius of the Church, resistless as these are. I would take him to the bedside of the Christian mourner, and bid him witness how trust in a Risen Jesus sweetens the cup of sorrow. I would take him to the humble abode of the Christian journeyman, and bid him witness how the hand of Jesus lightens every toil and plucks the sting from out of poverty. I would take him to some missionary station across the seas, and bid him witness how the love of Jesus has transformed a human hyena into a Christian lamb. I would bid him trace the history of the Christian Church, and scan the noble army of confessors and martyrs who have acted out their testimony in the dungeon and at the stake. This is the kind of testimony I would array before him. And then I would ask him: Can the Jesus of Whom these men in every walk of life in both hemispheres during eighteen centuries have so earnestly testified be a mere myth? Could a power which ex-

ists only in fancy have worked these mighty radical revolutions in these men's moral natures? Was there not just such a Jesus as the lives of these men assert to have been? Is their conduct explainable on any supposition other than that which admits the historic existence and career of the Nazarene? Do not the lives of these men who themselves have been witnesses of Jesus serve to others as witnesses for Jesus? Oh, we need no miracle to convince us that in Judea once dwelt and died and rose Jesus Christ, the Son of God. For we have seen the wicked man forsaking his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts. We have seen the blasphemer becoming a man of prayer; the libertine a man of purity; the miser a man of beneficence; Sauls of the Pharisees Pauls of the Nazarenes. And we who have seen these things have seen the displays of a superhuman energy which outdoes in wondrousness any physical prodigy, and yet which can not be accounted for except as it is identified with Jesus of Nazareth. Every human being converted to Christ is a divine credential of the historical Jesus. And these credentials have existed in every age since the Ascension of Him Whom they accredit. Those who have been witnesses to the Word that was made flesh and was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised again because of our justification, are to be found among the olive inhabitants of Asia, among the fair-faced children of Europe, among the sable sons of Africa, among the red men of our primeval forests, among the swarthy islanders of the oceans. And these wit-

Isa. iv. 7.

John i. 14.

Rom. iv. 25.

nesses are multiplying faster and faster, and their testimony is augmenting with a rapidity which outstrips the speed of the flying years. The sacramental host of God's elected witnesses of and to His Son's redeeming work is daily swelling in number and in strength. Sooner or later—God grant that it may be ere long!—before the judgment-seat of the world's decision shall Ignorance be convicted of her stupidity, and Indifference of her guilt, and Infidelity of her falsehoods; and then in the Name of Jesus shall every knee bow and every tongue confess that He once was crucified on earth and rose again and now reigns in heavenly pomp the Universal Lord. God speed that hour of Messiah's triumph! Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

Phil. ii. 10, 11.

Rev. xxii. 20.

Such are some of the indirect testimonies to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. In other words, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the key to the problems of Christian History. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for the marvelous revulsion in the feelings of the Apostles; the Risen Lord has appeared to them, and that Epiphany has turned a fugitive and despairing Church into a Church dauntless and exultant. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for the re-emergence of the Nazarene's Religion; that Religion had to all human vision been annihilated when the Nazarene Himself was crucified and buried; but the Nazarene Himself has risen and His Religion rose with Him. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for the amazing bravery of Simon Peter when on

Summary.

the fiftieth day after the Crucifixion and in presence of a mighty concourse of Jews in their own city of Jerusalem he dauntlessly charges home on them the sacrilegious murder of the Galilean, and summons them to repentance and baptism into the name of that same Jesus Whom they with wicked hands had crucified and slain ; the Risen Lord had appeared to the weeping Fisherman, and forgiven him his own dark sin of cowardly and profane denial, and restored him to his apostolate ; this it is which has changed the fickle Simon, son of flesh and blood, into the stalwart Peter, son of the everlasting Rock. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for the sudden and splendid inauguration of His Kingdom when at the close of this same Pentecostal sermon, and in this same city of Jerusalem where fifty days before He had been crucified and buried, three thousand were converted to Him and baptized into His Name ; He has risen from the dead, and ascended on high, and from His seat at the Father's right hand has poured forth this Pentecostal deluge. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for the triumph of Stephen in the very moment of his martyrdom, so that all the Council, gazing steadfastly on him, see his face as the face of an angel : the heavens open on him, and he sees the Glory of God and the Risen Jesus standing on the right hand of the Glory. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for the marvelous story of Saul of Tarsus ; the Risen Lord has appeared to him as to one born out of due time, and arrested him in his

career of persecution, and summoned him to a missionary life. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for the Apostolic choice of Sunday as the Christian Sabbath: for the only full twenty-four hours that Jesus lay in Joseph's tomb was the Seventh Day or Jewish Sabbath: and it was in the end of the Sabbath; as it began to dawn toward the First Day of the Week, that He rose triumphant, and by that Resurrection for ever consecrated Sunday. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for the Apostolic mode of conceiving Christian Baptism: Jesus Christ has died and risen again, and the early Church felt that in being baptized into His Name they were buried and raised with Him. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for the Apostolic mode of conceiving the Holy Communion: Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, and the early Church felt that in partaking of the sacred emblems they were communing with a living, forgiving, loving Friend. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for the Apostolic expectation of His Return: the Risen Lord has appeared to them, and visibly ascended before them, and by the mouth of the Two in shining apparel has said to them: "This same Jesus Who hath been taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as ye beheld Him go into heaven." The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for that unique and otherwise inexplicable element in psychology—Christian Experience: Jesus Christ, once dead but risen and still living, has appeared to countless saints during

Acts 1. 11.

eighteen centuries, speaking to them words of forgiveness and instruction and cheer and love. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ it is which accounts for that glorious and otherwise inexplicable phenomenon in human society—Christian Character: the crucified Jesus has risen from the dead, and is alive to-day, and is molding untold millions in His own celestial Image. In brief: the Divine Man has risen, and this explains everything.

This then is our summarized argument: the existence of the Christian Church is a demonstration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Yes, the Church of the Living God is the Child of the Resurrection, born when Jesus Christ rose from the dead. And so He is in very truth the Head of the Body, Himself the First-born from the dead, in all things evermore having the preëminence.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER
OF THE
FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 THESSALONIANS iv. 13-18.



XIV.

A STUDY IN THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER OF THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

IN closing our meditations on the Epiphanies of the Risen Lord, I do not think that we can do a more appropriate or profitable thing than to ponder St. Paul's Doctrine of the Resurrection as set forth in the Fifteenth Chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians. Probably no chapter in the Bible, unless we except the Twentieth of Exodus, has been oftener read in public than this. It is enshrined among the tenderest, most sacred associations of countless Christian households, serving as God's own panacea for centuries of grief, bringing solace and heavenly cheer to myriads of His bereaved ones. So comforting is it that we almost overlook the fact that it is also an elaborate argument. May the Spirit then especially help us as we study St. Paul's Doctrine of the Resurrection.

Preciousness
of this Chap-
ter.

And, first, the Gospel according to St. Paul : I. The Gospel
" *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gos- According*
pel which I preached unto you, which also ye to St. Paul.
have received, and wherein ye stand, by which Verses 1-4.
also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I

preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain : for I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." It is as though the Apostle had said : " Brethren of Corinth, I have no new Gospel to announce to you. I am content, yea rather I rejoice, to proclaim that same old Gospel which ye heard from my lips when I first visited you, that Gospel which ye then received to the joy of your hearts, that Gospel in which ye are standing to-day, that Gospel through which ye are being saved, if ye hold fast the blessed story as I announced it to you, unless indeed ye have been putting your trust in a fable. But it is not a fable : for I received it directly from the Risen Lord Himself. And the Gospel which I received from Him and made the theme of my preaching while among you and now reaffirm is this : CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES, AND WAS BURIED, AND ROSE AGAIN THE THIRD DAY ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES." Yes, it is the Gospel according to St. Paul. As such, it is the oldest creed in Christendom : for this Letter to the Corinthians is among the earliest Epistles of Paul, having been written before any of the Gospels. It is in the strictest sense "the Apostles' Creed." Christ's Death and Resurrection are the two great abutments of the cause-way between earth and heaven, the two great hinges on which turns the portal of the City of God.

Second: the Argument from Personal Testimony: *"He was seen of Cephas, then of the Twelve: after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep: after that, He was seen of James: then of all the Apostles: and last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time: for I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God: but by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain: but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me: therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed."* The resurrection of Jesus Christ, if it ever occurred, was an outward, historic, physical fact. As such, it was a matter of evidence or personal testimony. All Christendom admits that He was crucified. The pivotal question is this: Did He rise again? According to His resurrection, like His death, is an affair of evidence. The world then is right in demanding physical, historic proof of His resurrection. Nor are we afraid to meet the challenge. If ever there was a statement demonstrated on the basis of personal testimony, that statement is this: Jesus Christ rose from the dead. The preceding pages are occupied with an examination of these testimonies. The Apostle in his argument which we now have in hand enumerates six distinct Epiphanies of the Risen Lord, and gives the names of some of the witnesses. He mentions

II. The Argument from Personal Testimony. Verses 8-11.

first the Epiphany to Peter—probably that of the first Easter morning: then the Epiphany to the Apostles—probably that of the first Easter evening: then the Epiphany to above five hundred brethren at once—probably that of the Galilean Mount: then the Epiphany to James—of that this is the only record: then the Epiphany to all the Apostles—probably that of the Ascension: then lastly the Epiphany to himself on his way to Damascus. Concerning the Epiphany to the more than five hundred he adds this significant remark: “Of whom the greater part remain until now:” thus implying that if any one called in question the resurrection of Christ, a vast number of personal eye-witnesses of Him as risen were still living, ready to traverse the challenge. Observe also the pathetic humility with which the Apostle alludes to the Epiphany to himself: “Last of all, He appeared also to me, as to the one born out of due time—the one untimely child of the Apostolic family: for I am the least of the Apostles, and am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.” And yet, notwithstanding his profound humility, he has the sense of having been conspicuously successful as a proclaimer of the Glad Tidings: and so with a dignity alike lofty and lowly he adds: “But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain: but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” Having said this in way of meek, dignified digression, he reverts to the fundamental truth with

which he had started : “Whether then it were I or they, thus we preach, and thus ye believed.” It is as though he had said : “It matters not who proclaims the Good News, whether the greatest or the littlest of the Apostles : enough that the Good News that Christ died for our sins and rose again is proclaimed whether by great or small : enough that ye, Corinthians, accepted the Good News as true, and so are a Christian Church.” The summary of the Apostle’s argument from personal testimony then is this : Multitudes of persons are still living who have actually seen the Risen Lord, and they stand ready to confirm my statement by their own personal testimony.

Third : the Corinthian Denial : “*Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?*” Strange question this to put to a Christian Church ! And yet not so strange when we remember the elements of which the Corinthian Church was composed. First, there was the Jewish element : among them there were doubtless those who had been brought up in the Sadducean denial of resurrection and angel and spirit : and it was difficult for them, notwithstanding their conversion to Jesus Christ, to accept the literal resurrection of the dead : not that they denied the future life, but they denied the resurrection of the body. Secondly, there was the Gentile element : and this in its turn consisted of two parties : first, those who had been trained in the Greek schools of philosophy, saying with the Epicureans and Stoics whom Paul had met at Athens that a

III. The Corinthian Denial.
Verse 12.

Acts xxiii. 8.

physical resurrection was impossible : and, secondly, those who had inherited the Zoroastrian notion that matter is inherently evil, and therefore they did not even wish for a literal resurrection. Their notion of the future life was that it is a bodiless existence, and the only resurrection they acknowledged was the resurrection of the soul, or spiritual regeneration. This seems to have been the heresy of Hymenæus and Philetus, touching whom Paul wrote that they had gone astray concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection was past already, and were overthrowing the faith of some. It was to meet this heresy that this ever glorious Fifteenth Chapter was written. And the chapter is still needed. For the old Manichæan notion that matter as distinguished from spirit is somehow inherently evil still lingers in Christendom. The coming spiritual body is conceived to be a rarefied, ethereal, unsubstantial body : whereas, as we shall see, the spiritual body is a material body suited to the spirit. Moreover, the doubts which the modern philosophy tends to raise concerning the hereafter and personal immortality are subtly infecting society. If a man die, shall he live again ? is a question asked as sincerely to-day as in the days of the patriarch Job. Heartily then may we even thank God for the doubt of the Corinthian skeptic : for had there not been that doubt the Church might never have been enriched with this magnificent argument for the resurrection.

IV. The Argument from Absurdity.
Verses 18-19.

Fourth : the Argument from Absurdity :
“But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen,

then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain: yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, Whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins; then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished; if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Such are some of the moral consequences of denying the doctrine of the Resurrection. The method which the Apostle employs is that known as the Argument from the Absurdity of the Contrary Supposition. He points out five such absurdities.

The first absurdity is this: Christ Himself is still dead: "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." For as it was Jesus as Man that died, so it was Jesus as Man that rose. But if the resurrection of the dead is an impossibility, then Jesus Himself has not risen, the suborned report of the Roman guard that His disciples had come by night and stolen Him away is true, the Sanhedrim after all is triumphant, ye are worshiping a corpse.

The second absurdity is this: the Gospel is a delusion: "If Christ is not risen, vain then is our preaching, vain also is your faith; ye are still in your sins." Appalling conclusions surely! First: "Vain is our preaching." It is as though St. Paul had said: "We Apostles have not only been proclaiming a crucified, atoning Saviour; we have also been proclaiming a risen, living Friend, with

1. Christ Still
Dead.
Verse 13.

Matt. xxviii. 11-
15.

2. The Gospel
a Delusion.
Verses 14, 17.

Whom we can hold blessed communion. But if there is no such thing as the resurrection of the dead, then we have no living, communing Saviour. How empty then our preaching! How foolish my visit to Corinth!" Secondly: "Vain also is your faith." Ye have been putting your trust in a myth. Your blessed experience of having been forgiven by a risen Lord, your sweet sense of having communed with a living, triumphant Saviour, was altogether a delusion. Thirdly: "Ye are still in your sins." True, when the Christ was about to be born into the world, the Angel of the Lord commanded that His name should be called Jesus, i. e., Saviour; and the reason assigned was this: "He shall save His people from their sins." But the proof that Jesus is the Saviour lies in this—His resurrection; He was with power declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead. But if the resurrection of the dead is an impossibility, then Jesus has not been raised; and if Jesus has not been raised, then He is not the Son of God—you have no Saviour, your fate is still among the unforgiven, you are still in your sins. No Resurrection, no Gospel.

3. The Apostles Liars.
Verse 15.

The third absurdity is this: the Apostles are liars: "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we testified concerning God that He raised up Christ, Whom He did not raise up, if so be that the dead rise not." Observe how St. Paul puts his own personal veracity and that of his fellow apostles into direct issue. It is as though he had said: "We have been in the constant habit of testifying that God did raise up Jesus, and that

we ourselves have seen the Risen Lord ; but if it is the fact that there can be no resurrection of the dead, then God did not raise up Jesus, and we in testifying that He did were deliberate liars ; we were not merely mistaken dupes—we were conscious, sacrilegious impostors."

The fourth absurdity is this: the saintly are lost: "Then they also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished." If it is the fact that there can be no resurrection of the dead, then Christian Morality is a failure. The Heavenly Father puts no difference between the fate of the purest, most heroic, most self-sacrificing of His children and the fate of the beasts that perish ; as the one dieth, so dieth the other ; all go unto one place ; all are from the dust and all turn to dust again. Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, Isaiah, Mary, John, Paul, martyrs, missionaries, pastors, Sunday school teachers, praying mothers, all lie down at last with the atheist and the blasphemer and the dog in the same destruction, annihilated the moment they die.

The fifth absurdity is this: the life in Christ is a misery : "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable." It is as though the Apostle had said : "To profess Christ means self-denial, battling with temptation, fightings without, fears within, distress, persecution, martyrdom. Moreover, Christianity awakens within us loftiest aspirations which can never be satisfied in this world. But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then we Christians, exposing ourselves as we do to perpetual sorrows and perils,

<sup>4. The Saintly
Lost.
Verse 18.</sup>

^{Ecc. iii. 18-20.}

<sup>5. The Chris-
tian Life a
Misery.
Verse 19.</sup>

and fostering aspirations which are doomed to bitter, hopeless defeat, are of all men the most to be pitied."

Such are some of the unspeakable absurdities to which the denial of the doctrine of the Resurrection drives us. No wonder that the Apostle, as though shuddering at the ghastly conclusions, turns from them, and bursts into positive, triumphant affirmation.

V. Christ's Resurrection the Pledge of Ours.
Verses 20-23.

Verse 20.

Rom. vi. 9.

Col. i. 18.

Fifth: Christ's Resurrection the Pledge of ours: "*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept; for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive; but every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's, at His coming.*"

Away then with these ignoble, painful, sacrilegious absurdities! The indisputable, rapturous fact is, Jesus Christ has risen from the dead. And in simple virtue of that rising He became, to use language borrowed from the old Mosaic ritual, the first fruits or pledge-sheaf of the resurrection harvest. Not that He was the first to rise from the dead; the son of the Widow of Zarephath, the daughter of Jairus, Lazarus, and many others had been raised; but they died again; whereas Christ, having been raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over Him. And in thus rising to die no more He became the first fruits of those who sleep in Him. Being Himself the Head of the Body, the Church, and being Himself the Beginning, the First-born from the dead, He

here, as everywhere else, hath the preëminence. Moreover, it is in virtue of His own humanity that He became the first fruits or pledge-sheaf of the resurrection harvest ; for since through man came death, through man also came the resurrection of the dead. It was not because the Son of Man was also the Son of God that the resurrection became possible ; the resurrection became possible because the Son of God was also the Son of Man. Being Himself the archetypal, ideal Man, the Representative of the essentials of human nature, the Head and Epitome of humanity, *the Son of Man* : Mankind rose—ideally, potentially, prophetically, virtually rose—when Jesus the Man rose. As it was through man that sin entered into the world and death through sin, so it was through man that righteousness entered into the world and resurrection through righteousness. For as in the Adam all die, so also in the Christ all will be made alive. The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves will hear the voice of the Son of God and will come forth : they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment. But while it is true that Jesus Christ was the Son of Man or representative of the human race, so that His resurrection was the virtual resurrection of all mankind, it is clear that St. Paul in the argument of our chapter has in mind only the Christian dead, Christ being the first fruits of those who sleep in Him. As all who are in the first Adam die, so all who are in the second Adam will be made alive. But they are not to rise irregularly,

Verse 21.

Rom. v. 12-21.

Verse 22.

John v. 28, 29.

Verse 23.

1 Thess. iv. 14.

at fitful intervals. Each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so those also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him, that is, when He brings back Jesus amid the pomp of the Second Advent. This mention of Christ's Second Coming sweeps our Apostle forward by the law of Association to a Pisgah view of "the last things." Hence—

VI. The Con-

summation.

Verses 24-28.

Sixth: the Consummation: "*Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power; for He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death; for He hath put all things under His feet; but when He saith, All things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him; and when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things, under Him, that God may be all in all.*" It is in the strictest sense a unique Scripture. Standing absolutely by itself, with no parallel Scripture to serve as clew, it is in the eminent sense the Sphinx of God's Word. Accordingly in studying it we need special caution and reverence.*

* The author, having already commented on this passage as best he could in his little book entitled "Studies in the Model Prayer," pp. 62-68, and being unwilling to omit the consideration of so important a passage in the present Exegesis, takes the liberty of incorporating here the substance of that comment.

“*Then cometh the End:*” that is to say, the consummation, the Divine Finale of all human things, so far as finite man is vouchsafed glimpses of it. “*When He delivereth up the kingdom to God, even the Father.*” What kingdom is this which Christ will, after His Second Coming, deliver up to God the Father? Certainly not His Kingdom as the Son of God: that is to say, the Kingdom He administers as being Himself Divine, God over all, blessed for ever. In respect to His preincarnate, underived, eternal nature, He and the Father are one. This is the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Having an eternal nature, even the same as the Father’s, He has, like the Father, an eternal Kingdom, being Himself the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, Who is and Who was and Who is to come, the Almighty. Of this Divine Kingdom which He sways as one with the Father He can no more divest Himself than He can divest Himself of His own Godhead. God calleth His angels His ministers; but to the Son He saith: “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” No, the kingdom which the Son is to deliver up to the Father is the kingdom which God has given to Him as His Christ. It is not His underived Kingdom as God, but His derived kingdom as God’s Anointed One, the Christ of the Father, sent into the world for a specific purpose, even the restoration of God’s reign in man’s soul. Particularly is it the kingdom which the Father has be-

Rom. ix. 5.

John x. 10.

John xvii. 5.

John i. 1.

Rev. i. 8.

Heb. i. 7, 8.

Phil. ii. 6-11.

stowed on Him as the reward of His humiliation and sufferings when incarnate. Some passages are particularly in point. E. g., "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: *wherefore* God also hath highly exalted Him, and given to Him a Name which is above every name: that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow—of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth—and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." "We see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels, *on account of* His suffering of death crowned with glory and honor."

Heb. ii. 9.

"Looking unto Jesus, the Author and the Finisher of the Faith; Who, *for the joy that was set before Him*, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." This session of Jesus Christ then on the right hand of Majesty on high is the reward of His incarnate career. Thus enthroned He is administering the Father's Kingdom, so to speak, as the Father's Premier or Vice-roy.

Matt. xxviii. 18.

Eph. iv. 10.

1 Peter iii. 22.

Eph. 1. 20-22.

As such, all authority has been given to Him in heaven and on earth. He Who descended is the same also as He Who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things, angels and authorities being made subject unto Him. Him hath God raised from the dead, and seated

at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come, and put all things in subjection under His feet, and given Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fullness of Him Who filleth all in all. Not that His kingdom in the fullness of supremacy has yet come. Certain mighty changes must first take place. The august passage we have in hand mentions some of them. The Son of God, anointed for a mediatorial purpose, must continue reigning at the Father's right hand until, as David had prophesied concerning Him and as Peter reasserted before his Pentecostal hearers, He shall have put all enemies under His feet: "The Lord said unto my Lord: 'Sit Thou on My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.'" But we do not as a matter of fact yet see all things put under Him. Grief and pain and death and sin and Antichrist and Satan are still in the world. And the Christ must reign at God's right hand until He puts these and every other foe under His feet. Then, when He shall have destroyed all dominion and all authority and all power, He will yield up His conferred rule or kingdom as the redeeming Christ to the Father, and the Father's own Kingdom will come. Then cometh the End, when He delivereth up the kingdom to God, even the Father. For as this kingdom of the Christ of God was not original but derived, so it will not be everlasting. In fact, there is no necessity that it

Psalm cx. 1.
Acts ii. 34.

Heb. ii. 8.

1 Peter ii. 24.

Acts iii. 21.

Heb. i. 2.

should be everlasting. The Son of God became incarnate, and received His mediatorial kingdom for a specific purpose, namely, to restore God's reign in man's soul : and this by becoming God manifest in the flesh, by revealing God, disclosing His character and attributes and righteousness and love, by bearing our sins in His own body on the Tree, by recovering to fallen man the lost sense of sonship, and so bringing about the Restitution of all things. And when all these things shall have been achieved ; when Jesus Christ, as the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person, shall have displayed to the Universe Who and What God is ; when the disease for which the Gospel was introduced as a remedy shall have been fought and vanquished ; when the dead shall have been raised and the saints glorified and the reprobate exiled ; when the Nazarene shall have put down all rule and authority and power, and shall have annihilated the last foe—Death himself ; in short, when the purpose for which the Son of God became God's Christ shall have been achieved, then shall the End indeed come, and Jesus in His official capacity as the redeeming Christ shall be seen no more. But God be praised ! although the officer *Christ* will disappear, the Divine Man *Jesus* will everlastinglly remain. “ *That God may be all in all.*” How much do these wondrous words mean ? Are they to be taken in the pantheistic sense, as though the universe were to be merged into Deity, and all created personalities lost in the universal diffusion of Godhead ? Most certainly not. For a

God Who is Every Thing is a God Who is No Thing. The meaning of these words is to be determined by their context. The Apostle is speaking of the Son's reign, not as Divine, but as the reward of His incarnate career. So long as He thus reigns at God's right hand, Deity reigns as it were indirectly, under conditions of a mediatorial, redemptive economy. But when the Son shall have retired from His redeeming office, as He will when all the elect shall have recovered through Him their lost sonship, then will the Father reign, as it were, directly, without intervention of a reconciling Mediator. This seems to be the sense in which God will be All in All. Very significant in this connection is the vision of Paul's fellow-apostle John : "I saw no temple therein : Rev. xxi. 22. for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it." The Roman Pantheon was not altogether a lie ; for idolatry is generally the shadow, although in caricature, of truth. The heavenly temple is indeed Pantheon, wherein are not 1 Cor. viii. 5. lords many and gods many, but God Himself is All in All, alike all-continental and self-continent. I know I am touching on the boundary between the finite and the Infinite, where all is nebulous and umbral : therefore let my words be few and wary. In that Heavenly Temple, where God is All in All, the Church of His Lamb will somehow be enshrined in Him—gloriously involved—sublimely implicated in Deity. And yet not a saint shall lose his individuality or sense of personal identity. My finger as a finger is an individual ; yet it is also corporate and functional—in-

corporate in my body, functional to my will. So each saint will retain his individuality, and yet in some ineffable sense will be incorporate in Deity, functional to His adorable will, blessed organ of Him Who filleth all in all. Yes, there is a profound sense in which Pantheism is true. The day is coming when God will be all in all. Our Father Who art in Heaven, Thy Kingdom come!

Such is St. Paul's doctrine of the Consummation. And now he returns from his magnificent digression.

VII. Baptism
for the Dead.
Verse 29.

Seventh: The Corinthian Baptism for the Dead: "*Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?*" Numerous and elaborate are the interpretations which have been put into this famous passage; it is needless to enumerate them. I venture to think that there need be no difficulty here if we will but frankly accept the obvious meaning of the words. The very question of the Apostle implies that the practice of baptizing for the dead did more or less prevail among the Christians of Corinth. It is certain that such a practice existed among the heretical Cerinthians about the close of the first century. Chrysostom has given us the formula which was used on such occasions: "when a catechumen (i. e., a candidate for baptism but not actually baptized) had died, they hid a living man under the bed of the deceased; then coming to the bed of the dead man, they spoke to him, and asked him whether he would receive baptism; and he,

making no answer, the other replied in his stead, and so they baptized the living for the dead." Of course it was a totally unauthorized, gross superstition. Yet it doubtless had its origin in the instinct of love, naturally enough springing up among those who were but recent converts from heathenism, and therefore disposed to ascribe to rites or "sacraments" a supernatural efficacy. Observe: St. Paul tacitly disavows the superstition by separating himself and the rest of the Corinthian brethren from those who practiced this custom, exchanging here the pronoun "we" which he elsewhere uses throughout this chapter for the pronoun "they" which he uses only in the verse now before us: "What will *they* do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead rise not at all, why are *they* then baptized for them?" But you interrupt me with an objection. "Would not Paul," you ask, "have sternly rebuked such a superstition? Instead however of rebuking it, he even seems to sanction it by using it as one of his own arguments." The argument, I answer, is what the logicians style the *argumentum ad hominem*: that is to say, the home thrust. In the swift, impetuous rush of his argument he stops not to rebuke this superstitious custom, except by significantly exchanging here his pronoun "we" for the pronoun "they." He seizes that superstitious custom, and, master of circumstances that he always was, he subsidizes it to his own use, routing the heretics with their own superstition: "If the dead rise not at all, why then do some of you permit yourselves to be baptized in behalf of the unbap-

Col. ii. 12.

tized pious dead?" The force of the Apostle's argument turns, of course, on the symbolism of Baptism. Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also we were raised with Him: this explains the Corinthian baptism for the dead. Aye, Baptism itself, even when superstitiously practiced, is a witness to Easter.

VIII. The Personal Argument.
Verses 30-32.

2 Cor. xi. 24-27.

Eighth: The Personal Argument: "*And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily: if after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advan-*
tageth it me if the dead rise not?" Remember that in those days a Christian profession was no boy's play: it meant hate, scorn, fines, thongs, stocks, jail, cross. Recall what Paul himself had already suffered because he was a Christian and believed in the Resurrection, as he enumerates his sufferings in his Second Letter to these same Corinthians, and this, too, years before his other sufferings and martyrdom: "From the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one, thrice was I beater with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep, in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." Verily he did die daily. But if there is no resurrection of the dead, what advantage was

there to Paul in all this ceaseless, terrible misery ?
If there is no hereafter, he was the prince of idiots.

Ninth: The Awful Inference : “ *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.* ” It is evidently a citation from Isaiah xxii. 13. The prophet, foreseeing the siege of Jerusalem, foresees also the sacrilegious profligacy of the besieged inhabitants : “ In that day the Lord, the God of hosts, called to weeping and to mourning, to baldness and to girding with sackcloth ; but behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine, saying, ‘ Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.’ ” The Apostle, as is his wont, subsidizes the prophet’s saying to his own purpose. And his argument is this : “ If it is the fact that there is no resurrection of the dead and that this life is all, then those besieged inhabitants of ancient Jerusalem were right, these Athenian Epicureans of to-day profess the true philosophy. If there is no hereafter, or if, there being a hereafter, there is no distinct, self-conscious, embodied individuality, the most sensible thing we can do is to give up this absurd devotion to a dead Nazarene, and make the most of this life. If there is to be no resurrection, self-indulgence is the true philosophy.” And St. Paul’s argument is as true to-day as it was in his. The belief in a hereafter is the secret of holy living. The sense of a personal immortality is the key to personal righteousness. If the dead be not raised at all, let us eat and drink : for to-morrow we die.

Tenth: The Solemn Exhortation : “ *Be not deceived : evil communications corrupt good man-*

IX. The Awful
Inference.
Verse 32.

Isaiah xxii. 12,
13.

X. The Solemn
Exhortation.
Verses 33, 34.

ners: awake to righteousness, and sin not: for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." It is as though the Apostle had said: "Don't allow yourselves to be misled by the philosophies of the day! You can not associate with these skeptical Epicureans without contracting by contagion their laxity and sensuousness. Alas, that there should be need of my writing this to a Christian Church; but the enemy is among you, and has stolen away from some of you the knowledge of God; a shame it is that I am forced to defend the doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead; awake then, ye slumberers, to the better life, and sin no longer." And the Apostle's solemn exhortation is still needed. Beware of evil associates, beware of loose theories, beware of skeptical surmises.

XI. The Resurrection Problem.
Verse 35.

Eleventh: The Resurrection Problem: "*But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?*" Baffling as these questions were in the Apostle's day, they are still more baffling in these days of physical science. When we remember how death disintegrates the body into its constituent elements, decomposing the corpse into dust and gases, recomposing these constituent elements into air, water, plants, new kinds of flesh, and so on, we may ask with an emphasis to which the Corinthian doubter was a stranger: How is it possible for the dead to be raised? *

* Grim, and all the more grim because true, is Hamlet's comment on poor Yorick's skull in the church-yard of Elsinore: "To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not

Again : Assuming that the constituent elements of which the dead body is composed, but scattered here and there, could be re-collected, another question arises : With what kind of a body will the dead arise ? What will be their shape, their size, their organs, their functions, their appearance ? Will the future body be so much like the present that we shall know each other in heaven ? Such are some of the many questions which make the problem of the future body among the most fascinating of riddles. And so—

Twelfth : The Apostle's Answer : “ *Thou fool ! that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die ; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain : but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body : all flesh is not the same flesh ; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds ; there are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial : but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another ; there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon,* ”

XII. St. Paul's
Answer.
Verses 36-53.

imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole ? . . . Thus : Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust ; the dust is earth ; of earth we make loam ; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel ?

Imperial Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away :
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw ! ”

“ Hamlet,” Act v. Scene 1.

and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory; so also is the resurrection of the dead: it is sown in corruption—it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor—it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness—it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body—it is raised a spiritual body: there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body: and so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit: howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual: the first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven: as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly: and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly: now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption: behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed: for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." It is a magnificent answer. Let us ponder it in detail.

1. The Three-fold Analogy.
Verses 36-41.

And, first, the threefold analogy: "Fool! that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that will be, but a bare grain, it may chance

of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed its own body: all flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds; there are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another; there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory." Not that these analogies from Nature prove the doctrine of the Resurrection. They are only illustrations, or metaphorical arguments, strongly hinting from admitted facts in Nature the possibility and the manner of the resurrection. And now let us glance at these analogies.

From the first we learn this: Death is the condition of life: "Fool! that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." It is the echo of the Master's own saying in Passion Week: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Disorganization is the condition of reorganization. Death is the key to life. Indeed it may be truly said, at least of God's own children:

There is no death. What seems so is transition.

This life of mortal breath

Is but a suburb of the life Elysian

Whose portal we call death.

(a). Death the
Condition of
Life.

Verse 36.
John xii. 24.

H. W. Long-
fellow.

Dost thou ask, O bereaved one: "How is it possible that my friend whom death hath sown in

the grave shall rise again?" Let me answer even as Paul answered: "That which *thou* sowest is not quickened, except it die."

(b). Change
Consistent
with Identifi-
ty.
Verses 37-38.

Luk. vi. 44.

From the second analogy we learn this: Change is consistent with identity: "And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that will be, but a bare grain, of wheat perhaps, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body, as He willed, and to every seed its own body." That is to say: God in the original act of creating gave, as it pleased Him, to each kind of seed its own body, its own characteristic organism. And that characteristic organism each kind of seed retains to this day: men do not gather figs from thorns, nor grapes from brambles. Nevertheless, when you sow, e. g., wheat, you don't sow the matured plant; you sow only the kernel. Yet how different the full-grown stalk from the buried germ! How different the mighty oak from the tiny acorn! Let then agriculture teach you in this matter of the Resurrection. Alike in the case of the plant and in the case of the human body, change of figure is consistent with preservation of identity. Nevertheless, although the risen body will probably be as different in appearance from the present as the tasseled corn-stalk is from the kernel, or the oak from the acorn, yet the risen body will certainly be identical with the present. Remember that the man does not live who knows what that precise thing is which constitutes identity. Where is the philosopher who can tell me wherein consists the identity of the full-grown oak and the buried acorn? And yet both oak and acorn are

one and the same individual organism. It is sown an acorn: it is raised an oak. Chemists tell us that certain substances are capable of assuming entirely different aspects, which capacity they call allotropy; e. g., carbon as coal is hard and black, carbon as graphite is soft and iron-gray, carbon as diamond is adamantine and dazzling; and yet the substance, whether coal, graphite, or diamond, is one and the same substance, namely, carbon. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is a splendid instance of allotropy. The dead body is, if you please, God's diamond in the guise of coal; the risen body is, if you please, God's coal in the guise of diamond. Whether buried or raised, the "body" is the same. It is the mind, the consciousness, the personality, the *ego*, which is the basis of the identity, and this is indestructible. The resurrection of the body is a sublime instance of what the philosophers call "Conservation of Energy," or "Principle of Continuity." The buried body and the risen body, like the acorn and the oak, are phenomenally different, yet essentially identical.

From the third analogy we learn this: Matter (c). Matter is capable of an endless diversity of aspects: "All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another of beasts, another of birds, another of fishes: there are also bodies celestial, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another: there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for star differeth from star in glory." That is to

Capable of
Endless Di-
versities.
Verses 39-41.

Gen. 1.

say: it is not for finite man to limit the diversity of conditions and aspects which matter in the hands of an omnipotent God may be made to assume. Suppose that you had never seen a star or a plant or an animal, and that, if such a supposition is possible, you had never had even a conception of them. Suppose that on the morning of the Third Day of the Creative Week you had stood with the inspired Seer on his mount of panoramic vision. The created yet chaotic elements of the universe, the organizing Breath of God, the nebulous light, the separating expanse, the grouping seas and lands: all these have glided before you. Beholding these wonders, you might have supposed that the Creator's versatility was exhausted. But, lo, and this utterly beyond all range of your experience, expectation, or conception, there burst into view every variety of plant from daisy to cedar, every variety of animal from snail to elephant, every variety of heavenly body from meteor to star. You had no conception of these possibilities: and yet these possibilities have been actually realized in space and in time. Are we to suppose that the Infinite One has exhausted His resources of versatility? He Who has wrought such a various past can most surely work a future as various. Let us beware, then, how we incur in this matter of the Resurrection the Lord's rebuke of the Sadducees touching this very point: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, *nor the power of God.*"

Matt. xxii. 29.
2. Application
of the Three-
fold Analogy.
Verses 42-44.

And now we pass to the Apostle's application of his threefold analogy: "So also is the resurrec-

tion of the dead : it is sown in corruption—it is raised in incorruption : it is sown in dishonor—it is raised in glory : it is sown in weakness—it is raised in power : it is sown a natural body—it is raised a spiritual body." The analogy from the vegetable world seems to take special hold of the Apostle, and so it gives color to his whole application—"It is *sown*." But what is it that is sown? The body that will be? No. But the bare seed, the germinal principle, the *Vis Formativa*, that mysterious something—whatever you please to call it—which is the basis of the identity. And the changes which that sown germ undergoes are radical. It is sown in corruption—decomposition is the very reason why we are forced to put away our loved ones out of our sight : it is raised in incorruption—he that believeth in Him Who is Himself the Resurrection and the Life, though he die, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Him shall never die. It is sown in dishonor—however much we love our departed friends, however elaborate and costly the sepulchral honors we pay them, the very fact that we are forced to hide them amid the gloom and worms of the grave is a brand of dishonor : it is raised in glory—our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like the body of His glory. It is sown in weakness—the mute, motionless corpse, unable to resist decomposition and coffin lid and funeral procession and grave sod, is the very symbol of weakness : it is raised in power—

John xi. 25, 26.

Phil. iii. 20, 21.

recall the supernatural capacities of Christ's risen body, and we are to be fashioned like unto Him, He being the first fruits of them that sleep, alike their pledge-sheaf and their prophetic type. It is sown a natural body—a body suited to us as denizens of this world: it is raised a spiritual body—a body suited to us as citizens of the world to come. Death then is the very opposite of calamity to those who fall asleep in Jesus. To bury our loved ones is to plant them for a nobler life.

H. W. Long-fellow.

I like that ancient Saxon phrase which calls
The burial ground God's Acre. It is just:
It consecrates each grave within its walls,
And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust.

God's Acre! Yes, that blessed name imparts
Comfort to those who in the grave have sown
The seed that they have garnered in their hearts,
Their bread of life: alas, no more their own.

Into its furrow shall we all be cast,
In the sure faith that we shall rise again,
At the great harvest, when the Archangel's blast
Shall winnow, like a fan, the chaff and grain.

Then shall the good stand in immortal bloom,
In the fair gardens of that second birth:
And each bright blossom mingle its perfume
With that of flowers which never bloomed on earth.

With thy rude plowshare, Death, turn up the sod,
And spread the furrow for the seed we sow:
This is the field and Acre of our God,
This is the place where human harvests grow.

Again: The Two Bodies: "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." * The term "spiritual" as the Apostle here uses it can not mean "made of spirit": for this would be a contradiction in terms, as much as though one should speak of an immaterial material. The contrast is not, as the authorized version seems to imply, between matter and spirit, between what is material and what is immaterial: the contrast is between what is animal and what is spiritual, or to use the Apostle's own words, between what is "psychical" and what is "pneumatic." The assertion which St. Paul makes is this: There is a psychical body, or body suited to the lower part of our nature: and there is a pneumatic body, or body suited to the higher part of our nature. And his argument is this: As certainly as we have a body suited to our lower psychical nature, just so certainly shall we have a body suited to our higher pneumatic nature. It is sown a psychical body—it is raised a pneumatic body: as there is a body psychical, so there is a body pneumatic. Glance for a moment at the statement that the present body is a psychical body. How true the statement is! However unsuited to the higher, spiritual, pneumatic nature, the present body is admirably suited to the lower, animal, psychical nature. See how readily and perfectly it obeys the psyche, or animal instincts: how reluctantly and imperfectly it obeys the pneuma, or spiritual instincts. The

3. The Two Bodies.
Verse 44.

* The author has commented on 1 Cor. xv., 44-46, in his article entitled "The Scriptural Anthropology," published in the "Baptist Quarterly" for 1867.

savage, so completely the creature of circumstance and impulse and instinct, is the type of the psychical man. Notice also that if ever a man lives a life that is merely animal, it is the barbarian. And there is no man that finds the body such a fit instrument of his wants and instincts and tendencies as the savage. The body is a well nigh perfect organ of the psyche. Well then may the Apostle call it a psychical body. Glance now at the other statement that the coming body is to be a pneumatic body. Bearing in mind that the pneuma or spirit is the highest part of man's nature—that part which is made in the image and after the likeness of God, and which makes man but little lower than God Himself—that capacity by which he has the sense of God, coming into felt contact with Him, apprehending Him, knowing Him, entering into conscious fellowship with Him, becoming a partaker of the Divine nature as being a son of the Father of Spirits: it needs little argument to show that in what respects this present body is most suited to our psychical, animal nature, in those respects it is most unsuited to our pneumatic, spiritual nature. While the body is an unobstructed inlet and outlet for the psyche, it is a blockaded port to the pneuma. It is easy to walk by sight, which is a psychical life, for here we have the help of the body: it is hard to walk by faith, which is a pneumatic life, for here we have the embargo of the body. There is profound philosophy in a temperate Christian asceticism, keeping the body under and bringing it into subjection: it clarifies and sharpens the spiritual sense

Gen. i. 26.

Psalm viii. 5.

1 Peter i. 4.

Heb. xii. 11.

2 Cor. v. 7.

1 Cor. ix. 27.

and girds up the pneumatic powers. But even here the body as now constituted is at best but a miserable organ of what is highest in man's nature, as many an earnest Christian has bitterly felt. And therefore does he, like all those who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan within himself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body: observe, not the redemption from our body, but of our body. And what a glorious body that redeemed body will be! What will be its figure or precise nature we know not: for Holy Scripture has not revealed it. But this we do know, for this Holy Scripture has revealed: it will be a body as perfectly suited to the pneuma, or our higher nature, as the present body is suited to the psyche, or our lower nature. And as the pneuma is incomparably nobler than the psyche, so will the coming pneumatic body be incomparably nobler than the present psychical body. It will be the same body as the present, but as much more glorious as the golden sheaves of autumn are more glorious than the decaying seeds of spring. Blessed then is the light which our passage casts on the future state. True, it does not tell us what the coming body will be. But it tells us, what is more blessed for us to know, that that body will be perfectly suited to the noblest, divinest part of our nature. It tells us that the emancipated, glorified pneuma or spirit will be invested with a pneumatic or spiritual body perfectly correspondent to all her majestic wants, perfectly instrumental to all her majestic capacities. It tells us that the coming pneumatic body

will be in very fact the *Novum Organon* of the celestial realm in a sense transcendently sublimer than any which Francis Bacon ever conceived. It tells us that the then glorified pneuma, girded with a rectified reason, a clarified conscience, a free, regent will, gifted with powers of direct and sacred intuition, endowed with the dynamic force of an immortal growth, and gathering as she careers through the eternal cycles fresh and measureless accessions of strength and knowledge and love and purity and glory, shall have in her spiritual body a perfect and shining vehicle, whose glowing axle shall evermore keep glad pace with her own lightning speed. In fine, it tells us that our salvation will be a *whole* salvation, a complete transfiguration of the entire man, an everlasting beatitude for spirit and soul and body.

1 Thess. v. 28.

4. The Two
Adams.
Verse 45.

Again: the Two Adams: "And so it is written, 'The first man Adam was made a living soul'; the last Adam is a life-giving Spirit." It is a very difficult passage. Note, then, as our clew, that the Apostle is setting forth here the dignity of the resurrection body. His point is that the future body of the redeemed will be incomparably nobler than the present; and this for the reason that in the future life the pneuma or nobler part of man's nature will be supreme, whereas in this life the psyche or lower part of man's nature is, even in the case of the saintly, the dominant principle. And this latter fact, he declares, is no new fact, obtruding into the world as a consequence of sin; it is as old as Adam himself. And so it is written, "The first man Adam was made

Gen. ii. 7.

a living psyche." Observe, however, that when the Apostle says this, we must not understand him as implying that Adam was created with only a psychical nature. He was created a complete man, having spirit and soul and body. But in declaring that Adam was made a living psyche, the Apostle is describing him only characterizing; that is to say, by the trait which most prominently marked him. Thus, when we say of a certain man "he is all nerve," we do not mean to deny that he has muscle or bone or blood; we only mean to say that his nervous system specially characterizes him. So, when Paul declares that Adam was made a living psyche, he does not mean to say that he was made without a pneuma any more than without a body. He simply describes him by that trait or principle which was most dominant in him as a creature placed under conditions of progress: for that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. Capable of ascending according to the Divinely-ordained law of growth into a state where the pneuma will be supreme, the Creator so constituted him that he began his career in a state where the psyche was supreme. Psyche was the keynote of Adam's initial condition. And so it is written, "The first man Adam was made a living soul." And now let us glance at the other member of the antithesis: "The last Adam is a quickening Spirit, a life-giving Pneuma." As Paul is not to be understood as denying to the first Adam the possession of a pneumatic nature, so he is not to be understood as

denying to the Last Adam the possession of a psychical nature. He, too, was a complete man, having spirit and soul and body. The Apostle is describing the two Adams, not absolutely, but relatively and contrastingly, by those more prominent distinctive traits which gave to each his character. As the first Adam, although possessing spirit and soul and body, was, speaking *characterizingly*, a psychical man, so the Second Adam, although likewise possessing spirit and soul and body, was, speaking *characterizingly*, a pneumatic man. Thus distinguished, the first Adam was made a psyche, the Last Adam a Pneuma. Note also that while the first Adam is described as a "soul" that is simply "living," the Second Adam is described as a "Spirit" that is not only "living" but also "life-giving." In the first Adam life existed as in a receptacle; from the Second Adam life flows as from a fountain. Having life in Himself inherently, and not as a gift, the Second Adam touches life in its very origin and spring, being Himself the Resurrection and the Life. As all men born of the first Adam receive from him a body psychical, and this for the reason that he was what he was, namely, a living psyche, so all men born of the Second Adam receive from Him a body pneumatic, and this for the reason that He is what He is, namely, a life-giving Pneuma. As in Adam all die, so in Christ will all be made alive. There stands the blighted tree of humanity, drooping and dying, its sap corrupted, its fruit blasted, its leaves withered, its branches broken, its root decaying. But the Eternal Word descended; and,

grafting Himself as though a Divine Scion taken from the very root of Godhead into the decaying stock of our humanity, He implants the germ of a new and diviner life. True, this revivifying, ennobling Graft does not necessarily propagate its influence through every twig and leaf of the tree. As with the earthly trees about us, although every leaf is organically connected with the whole tree, yet each leaf, as though an independent unit, may keep green or fade, thrive or die, by itself: even so with the tree of humanity, although the Son of God grafted Himself into its stock by becoming the Son of Man, and offers to vitalize and glorify the whole tree to remotest twig and tiniest leaflet, yet only those leaves that retain a vital connection with the Divine Scion can receive the heavenly quickening. "As the ^{John xv. 4.} branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye, except ye abide in Me." The great lesson of our passage, then, is this: The two Adams—the one the Adam from the dust and returning to the dust, the other the Adam from heaven and returning to heaven—these are the two springheads of humanity. The first Adam, as being psychical, was simply living; the Second Adam, as being pneumatic, is also life-giving. The first Adam was, so to speak, the negative pole of humanity; the Second Adam is the positive pole. Accordingly, what we lost in the first Adam, even Eden the earthly, we may regain, and immeasurably more than regain, in the Second Adam, even Eden the heavenly. If by the ^{Rom. v. 17.} one man's offense death reigned through the one,

much more they who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, even Jesus Christ.

5. The Law of Progress.
Verse 46.

Eph. 1. 11.

Again: The Law of Progress: "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual"; or, to render it literally: "Not first the pneumatic, but the psychical, then the pneumatic." It is a fine instance of God's Law of Ascent. There is no caprice, no sorrowing, no repenting in Him. He is a Sovereign indeed, working out all things after the counsel of His own will. But in exercising His sovereignty it pleases Him to rule according to a law of progress. Whenever Deity marches, it is always to advance, never to recede, bidding His creatures obey the law of an ever-ascending order. It is inwrought as a constitutive part of the Divine scheme of things that the lower should precede the higher, the immature the mature, the imperfect the perfect, the body psychical the body pneumatic, the first Adam the Second Adam. Not first the pneumatic, but the psychical, then the pneumatic.

6. The Two Paternities.
Verses 47, 48.

Again: The Two Paternities: "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the Second Man is from heaven: as is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly; and as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are Heavenly." It is an emphatic re-statement of the great fact that there are two Adams, the one earthly, the Other Heavenly. And these two Adams are the representatives as well as sires of two humanities: as is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly; as is the Heavenly, such

are they also that are Heavenly. It is a sublime instance of the Law of Heredity. As the Lord Himself has proclaimed : " That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit : marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Born of the first Adam, who was of the earth, earthy, we share his fall and his mortality ; born of the Second Adam, Who is of the heavens, heavenly, we share His righteousness and His immortality. How sublime a thing, then, it is to be a son of the Second Adam, that is to say, a Christian ! True, it is a noble thing to be a son of the first Adam, that is to say, a Man. To be able to paint with Raphael, to sing with Shakespeare, to discover with Newton, to reason with Aristotle, to love with David, is nobility indeed. But, after all, it is the nobility of the psychical man in the inferior plane of nature, born of the first Adam, of the earth, earthy. But to know and feel and love and purpose and grow divine with the Lord from heaven, Son of God and Son of Man, is to dwell on the very highest crests of all possible greatness and majesty, because born in the immeasurably loftier plane of supernature, even of the Second Adam, Deity incarnate. The one has his glory, but the glory is terrestrial ; the Other too has His glory, but the glory is celestial.

Again : The Two Images : " And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly." Of course the language is meant only for those who are genuine followers of Christ. And even these bear the image

John iii. 6, 7.

7. The Two Images.
Verse 49.

of the earthy : descended from the first Adam, they share his fall, his ills, his mortality. But if they have been born again, if they are truly Christians, if they have had fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, and been conformed to the likeness of His death, they will know the power of His resurrection, and their bodies will be fashioned like His

Phil. iii. 10.

of the Heavenly. Christians are the only true Christophers, that is to say, Christ-bearers. And none but they who bear the image of Christ's character will bear the image of Christ's heavenly body. None but they who are spiritually minded will have the spiritual, pneumatic body. And they will have it. If the Spirit of Him Who raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He Who raised up Christ from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwelleth in you. Heaven grant that all of us, beholding with unveiled face, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord, may be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord, the Spirit !

Phil. iii. 21.

Rom. viii. 11.

2 Cor. iii. 18.

Psalm xvii. 15.

8. The Inherent Impossibility.
Verse 50.

Yea, satisfied shall we be when we awake with Thy likeness.

Again : The Inherent Impossibility : " Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." " *Now this I say, brethren.*" The expression indicates that the Apostle is about to say something of grave importance. For, although he has all along been asserting emphatically the doctrine of the Resurrection, yet, if we examine his words closely, we shall see that

his language concerning the risen body itself has been, after all, general and indefinite. Although asserting positively the fact of the resurrection, he has spoken of the risen body itself in vague terms, affirming of it that it is a body incorruptible, glorious, pneumatic, heavenly; but he has not stated explicitly either the constituent elements or the structure of the risen body. Having —by his analogies drawn from the difference between wheat as sown and wheat as reaped, and the difference between the flesh of men and the flesh of beasts and the flesh of birds and the flesh of fishes, and the difference between the glory of the sun and the glory of the moon and the glory of the stars—prepared the way for a more positive statement, he now proceeds to make that statement, introducing it with the emphatic words, “Now this I say, brethren.” That positive statement is as follows: “*Flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*” That is to say: Flesh and blood, which are the chief components of man’s body as now constituted, and may therefore well stand as its representative, are in their very nature, by the laws of their very being, corruptible; and therefore flesh and blood, in simple virtue of the law of heredity, can not inherit God’s incorruptible, heavenly kingdom. The law of inheritance—the law which declares that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and can never be anything but flesh; that that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and can never be anything but spirit; that like begets like, and can beget no

otherwise—the simple law of heredity, I say, forever excludes the possibility that corruptible flesh and blood should inherit as son and heir God's kingdom of incorruption. True, the apostle speaks of the future body as identical with the present. But the identity does not consist in identity of component or structure or function ; the identity consists in identity of the *Ego*, or self-conscious personality, or rather in the mysterious *Vis Formativa* inherent in the *Ego*—that subtle plastic form which under one set of conditions takes on one kind of body, and under another set of conditions takes on another kind of body. True, the Lord's risen body seemed identical in material and structure with the body that had been buried. Remember, however, that it was strictly a supernatural body ; like the bodies of the angels, it was capable of sudden manifestations and sudden evanitions, capable of taking on flesh and bones and eating and also of gliding through closed doors and ascending, capable of instantly adjusting itself now to this set of conditions and now to that, capable of taking on and laying aside at will the guise of a human body. And our bodies are to be fashioned like unto the body of His glory. We can not argue, then, from the fact that Christ's risen body seemed identical with His buried that our resurrection bodies will also be identical with our present. But we can argue that our resurrection bodies will have the power of assuming, whenever we choose, the guise of our present bodies. That is to say: the identity of the present and future body does not consist in identity of material or-

ganization: the identity consists in the identity of the organizing force—a force which, in this world, takes on a body of the psychical kind, and, in the world to come, will take on a body of the pneumatic kind. Do not be misled, then, by the Apostle's use of the term "body" in our chapter. Keep in mind his own saying: "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that will be." How different the waving grain of autumn from the buried seed of spring! And yet waving grain and buried seed are identical in respect to individuality. How absurd, then, the doctrine of the "resurrection of relics"! that is, the doctrine that the future body will be identical in substance and aspect with the present.* Of course it will still be a material body—it would not be a "body" if it were not material—but it will be a material body organized under new conditions of matter, these new conditions being implied in the Divine promise of the new heavens and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. One thing is certain: Flesh and blood, or the bodily organism as now constituted, and therefore corruptible, can not inherit God's incorruptible kingdom.

Again: The Great Translation: "Behold, I ^{9. The Great Translation.}

* So absurd is the doctrine, that any attempt, no matter how solemn, to illustrate it in detail is inevitably grotesque. E. g.—

Now charnels rattle: scattered limbs, and all
 The various bones, obsequious to the call,
 Self-moved advance: the neck, perhaps, to meet
 The distant head; the distant head, the feet.
 Doleful to view! See, thro' the dusky sky
 Fragments of bodies in confusion fly.
 To distant regions, journeying there to claim
 Deserted members, to complete the frame.

Young's "Night Thoughts."

show you a great mystery : we shall not all sleep ; but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed ; for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” The language recalls what St. Paul had already written in his

¹ Thess. iv. 15-18.

unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the Coming of the Lord shall not prevent, i. e., go before them that are asleep : for the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven, with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God : and the dead in Christ will rise first ; then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them, in clouds, to meet the Lord, in the air ; and so shall we ever be with the Lord : wherefore comfort one another with these words.” Thus St. Paul, whether writing to Thessalonians or to Corinthians, is consistent with himself. But let us ponder his declaration as set forth in our chapter. It is as though he had said : “Behold, I have a great announcement to make to you : a glorious truth hitherto hidden, but now Divinely disclosed ; for I received it in direct revelation from the Risen Lord. That revelation is this : We shall not all die ; it may be that I myself shall survive until the return of the ascended Lord. But however this may be, the following thing is certain : All of us, whether living or dead when He returns, shall be changed : and this because,

as I have just stated, these present bodies of ours, composed as they are of dissolving, mortal flesh and blood, can not possibly fall heir to an estate of incorruption and immortality. Think not, then, that the honors of translation are reserved only for Enoch and Elijah; the entire Church of the living God, whether alive or dead when His Son returns, will also be translated. And the translation will be instantaneous, swift as the lightning gleam. For the hour is coming when the Risen Lord, Himself the first born from the dead, and so the first fruits of them that sleep, having put down all rule and authority and power, and planted His foot on the neck of His last foe—Death himself—will descend from His seat at the Father's right hand, and, heralded by the archangel's trump,* and escorted by myriads of acclaiming seraphim, will stand again upon earth, returning with the same body with which some of us have seen Him going up. And when He thus descends, His Church, even all those who are His at His Coming, shall be changed: those who are then alive being translated, and those whose bodies had been laid away in corruption and dishonor and weakness taking on bodies of incorruption and glory and power: for as there is a psychical, animal body, so there is a pneumatic, spiritual body. For the resurrection is not loss of identity, it is a

Acts i. 11.

* How grand the Mediæval verse:

Tuba mirum spargens sonum,
Per sepulchra regionum,
Coget omnes ante thronum.

“Dies Iræ.”

2 Cor. v. 1-4.

change of vesture; not an unclothing, but a clothing upon with our raiment from Heaven, even the spiritual body. And when we shall have received the heavenly raiment, then it will be seen that this corruption has indeed put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality."

XIII. The Triumphant Song.
Verses 54-57.

Isaiah xxv. 8.

2 Cor. v. 4.

Thirteenth: The Triumphant Song: "*So when this corruption shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, Who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" It is as though the Apostle had said: "When the great translation shall have taken place, when the saints shall have been invested with their spiritual, undecaying, deathless bodies, then will be fulfilled in the deepest sense Isaiah's prophetic saying concerning the Messiah: 'He will swallow up death for ever.' What though Death has been Time's gigantic devourer, remorselessly swallowing up the infants and patriarchs and empires of all lands and ages? Jesus Christ is the final Conqueror. His victory is as it were a great maelstrom in the heavenly sea, into which all hostile forces, and especially Death himself—the last and bitterest of His foes—will be engulfed and drowned, mortality being in very truth swallowed up by Life. Even now I see that victory as a conquest already won. And so, bending over the dissolving body of my dying friend, I confi-

dently exclaim, O Death, where is thy sting? Standing by his open grave, I triumphantly shout, O Grave, where is thy victory? For Death, like a colossal scorpion, doth have a sting, injecting poison and disease and anguish at the same time that he strikes down: and therefore even of many of God's noblest saints it must be confessed that through fear of death they are all their lifetime subject to bondage. And Sin it is which arms Death with his poisonous barb. Had the first Adam never fallen and Sin never entered the world, we would still have had these psychical, animal bodies of corruptible flesh and blood, and therefore must still have undergone the great transition before we could enter God's kingdom of incorruption; but the great transition would have been stingless, painless, rapturous, like the translation of Enoch and Elijah. But Sin hath entered the world, and therefore Death doth have his sting. Moreover, the strength of sin is the law; for where there is no law, there is no transgression; indeed I had not known Sin except through the law: I should not know coveting if the law did not say, 'Thou shalt not covet'; but Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of coveting, and so slew me. Oh, wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. For God it is Who giveth us the victory over Sin, and therefore over Death, taking out his sting. And He giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh

Heb. ii. 15.

Rom. iv. 15.

Rom. vii. 7-25.

Ex. xx. 17.

Heb. ii. 14, 15.

and blood—yes, this corruptible flesh and blood—He also Himself partook of the same, that through His own death He might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the Devil, and deliver those who through all their lifetime were subject to bondage. And He hath risen from the dead, by that fact becoming the first fruits of those that sleep, being Himself the Resurrection and the Life. Yea, thanks be to God, Who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

John xl. 25.

Rom. viii. 37.

XIV. The Inspiring Inference.
Verse 58.

Rom. vi. 9.

2 Tim. i. 10.

Lastly: The Inspiring Inference: "*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*" And the inference is as resistless as it is inspiring. If there is no hereafter, or if, there being a hereafter, there is no distinct, self-conscious, embodied personality, nothing but a vague "remergence in the general Soul," then we might indeed falter amid our many discouragements and sorrows and persecutions, and even abandon the Christianity we have professed. With the Epicureans we might say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." But Jesus Christ *hath* risen from the dead, and dieth no more—Death hath no more dominion over Him. By that resurrection and entrance upon the heavenly immortality, He hath abolished death and brought life and incorruption to light through the Gospel. In fact, this it is which makes His resurrection a Gospel indeed, an evangel of great joy.

What though we are called to sow in tears, and yet seem to reap so little ? The true harvest is at the end of the world. In that blessed hereafter of the new heavens and earth, we, Sons of the Resurrection, shall reap in glory what we had sown in tears in this poor world of time. It is not possible that our labor in a Risen Lord should be in vain. Let us not be weary, then, in well-doing, for in due season—even the rapturous hour of the eternal Epiphany—we shall reap if we faint not. What though we are called to pass through tribulation, and distress, and persecution, and famine, and nakedness, and peril, and sword, so that, as it is written, “ For Thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter ” ? This is not all of life. There is a blessed hereafter. Who are these, whom no man can number, standing before the Throne, arrayed in white robes, having palms in their hands ? These are they who have come up out of the great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His Temple ; and He Who sitteth on the Throne will spread His tabernacle over them : they shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more, neither shall the sun fall on them, nor any heat ; for the Lamb Who is in the midst of the Throne will feed them, and will lead them to living fountains of waters ; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. *Therefore*, my beloved brethren, let us be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foras-

Matt. xiii. 39.

Luke xx. 36.

Gal. vi. 9.

Rom. viii. 25, 36.

Psalm xlii. 22.

Rev. vii. 9-17.

Isaiah xlix. 10.

Isaiah xxv. 8.

much as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Belief in the Future Life the Inspiration of the Present.

This, then, is the moral as well as literal conclusion of St. Paul's magnificent Argument for the Resurrection. Discussing a problem deeply fascinating, he does not allow himself to loiter among questions of mere curiosity. Discussing a subject intensely thrilling, he does not allow his discussion to evaporate into mere sentimentality. Arguing with the logic of an Aristotle, he does not allow himself to be content with a mere dialectical display. Descanting with the rhetoric of a Demosthenes, he does not allow himself to conclude with a peroration of mere eloquence. His moral nature is too profound, his sense of fellowship and personal identity with his Slain and Risen Lord is too intense, to allow him any other conclusion than one profoundly practical. Therefore, in view of the glorious certainty that Jesus Christ has risen and that we are to rise—*therefore*, my beloved brethren, let us be steadfast under every trial, immovable against every temptation, forasmuch as we know that there is a hereafter, and that no toil in the sphere of the Risen Lord can possibly be in vain. Here, in fact, is the grand inspiration to a Christian life. The certainty of a hereafter, ponderous with all manner of eternal weights of glory, is the awakening, buttressing, uplifting force for society. *The secret of the power to walk with God in this world lies in the sense of a personal immortality in the beatific presence of His Risen Son in the world to come.* He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.

2 Cor. iv. 17.

1 John iii. 8.

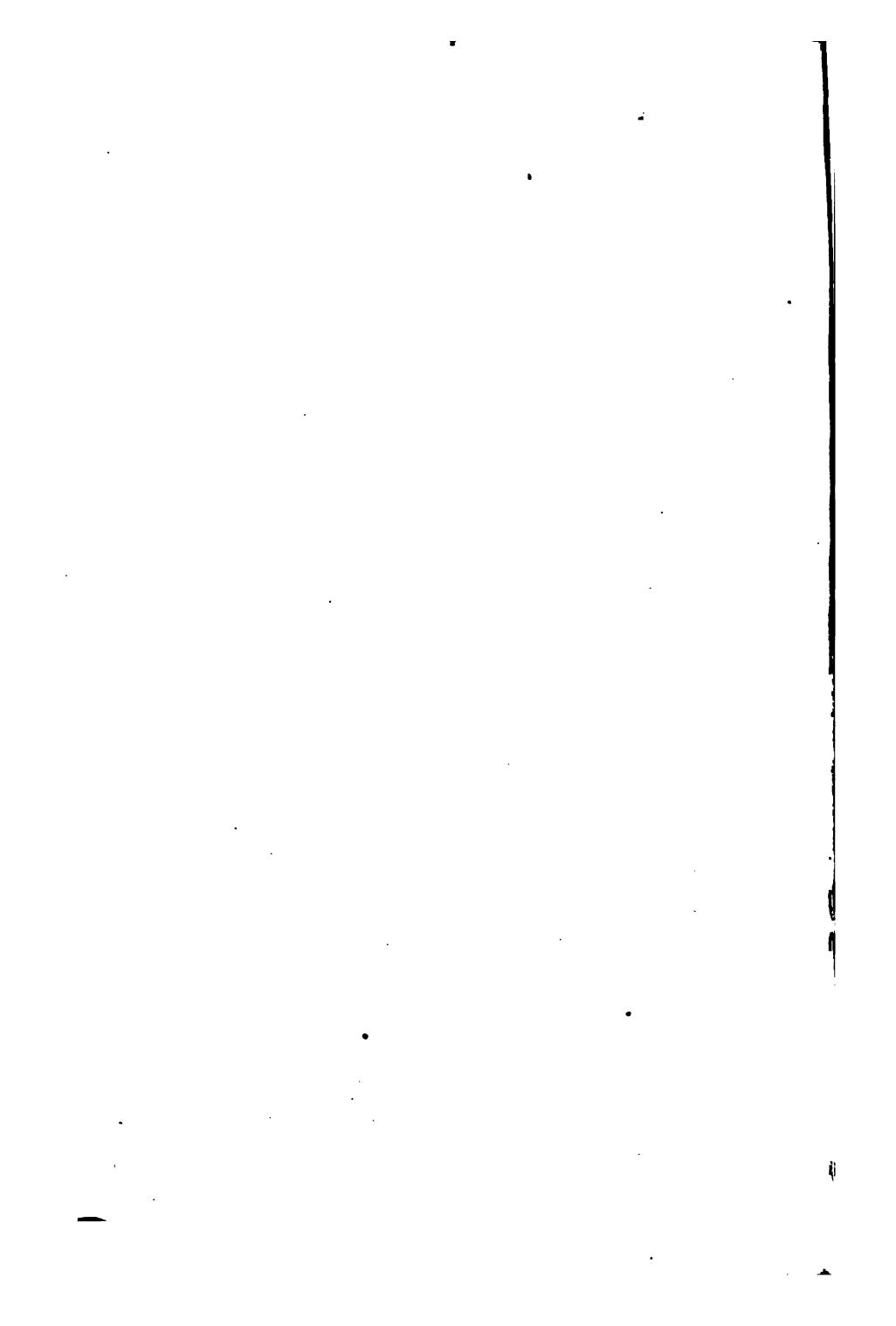
Heaven grant that all of us may share St. Paul's triumphant assurance of the Resurrection ! Then when He Who is our Life shall appear, we ^{Col. iii. 4.} also shall appear with Him in the glory of His blessed, eternal Epiphany.

He Who testifieth these things saith :

“ Surely, I come quickly.”

Amen, come, Lord Jesus !

Rev. xxii. 20.



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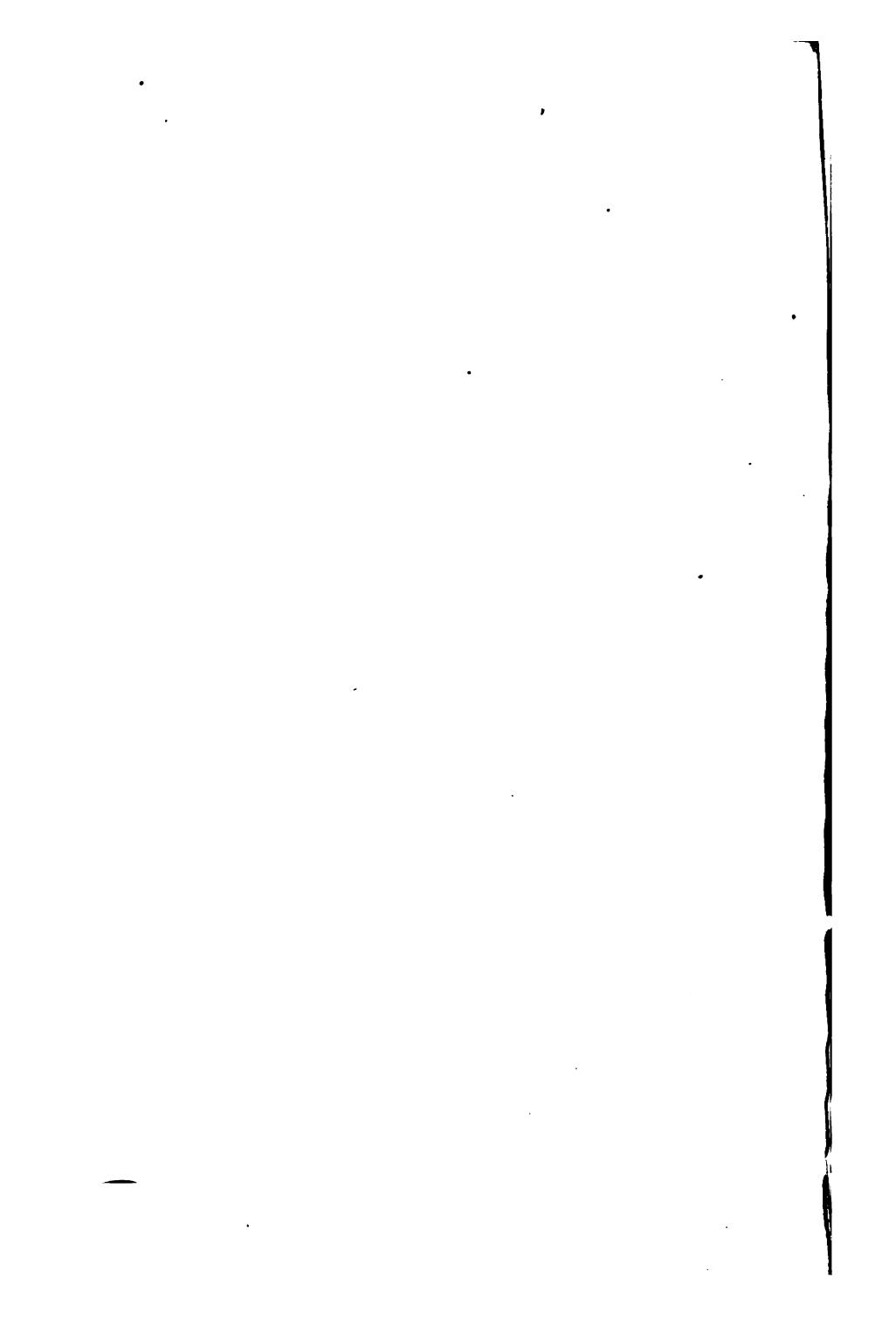
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